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Minister of Education
Hon. Bette Stephenson, M.D.

Curriculum Guideline for the

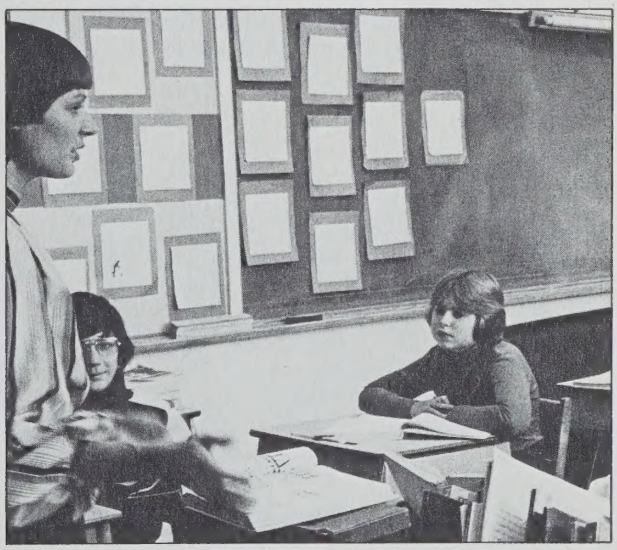
Intermediate Division

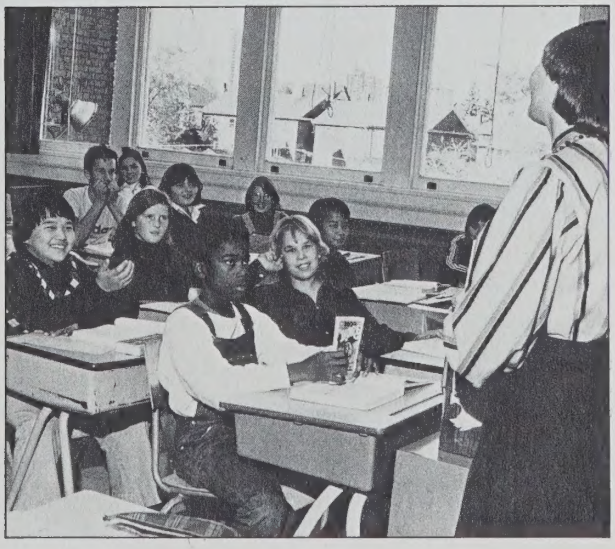
ENGLISH

1977

Kate's Poem
by Jean Little

When I opened my eyes this morning,
The day belonged to me.
The sky was mine and the sun,
And my feet got up dancing.
The marmalade was mine and the squares of sidewalk
And all the birds in the trees.
So I stood and I considered
Stopping the world right there,
Making today go on and on forever.
But I decided not to.
I let the world spin on and I went to school.
I almost did it, but then, I said to myself,
"Who knows what you might be missing tomorrow?"





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(cont'd on inside back cover)

Training in the understanding and use of English must be a prime purpose of education. To fall short of an acceptable standard in this field is to remain uneducated. To achieve such a standard is a prerequisite for all intellectual progress. Without it, instruction in other subjects of the curriculum, where English is used to express thoughts and comprehend ideas, must inevitably fail. For any pupil in our schools to be less than fully articulate in English means the retarding or halting of his development to some extent. From the point of view of the development of the whole child, competency in the understanding and use of English must come first.

— The Hope Report, 1950.

From the point of view of the community, it is our opinion that democracy itself cannot survive in an illiterate or semi-illiterate population. Democracy needs a high level of ability to understand language, coupled with a critical awareness of the possibility of misuse in what is written or spoken by others. With children the spoken word must be given precedence over the written. The former comes first in the development of each child. It looms large in his daily life, and in the main determines his social acceptance and adequacy. Not that the use and understanding of the written word should be neglected in education; we dare not do this in these days when propaganda and demagogy are rendered doubly dangerous through a flood of newspapers, pamphlets and books, fervently pleading special causes on behalf of special interests.

Ontario

Ministry of
Education

ENGLISH, INTERMEDIATE DIVISION, 1977

The following information is provided to assist educators responsible for the implementation of the new Intermediate Division English guideline. The implementation date for this guideline is September, 1978.

In the spring of 1977, an initial draft was presented to the validators, and, through the Regional Offices, to a range of boards, schools, and teachers. The quality of the final document reflects both the many valuable and constructive criticisms received and the writing committee's determination to design a guideline that will encourage effective programming.

At the elementary level, the writing team's chief concern was to encourage a cohesive language development program. At the secondary level, one of the main goals was to develop a program that would encourage active student participation in the learning process. There was general agreement that at all levels of the school system more thought had to be given to the role and responsibility of individual teachers in developing students' language concepts and skills, particularly those that pertain to the teacher's specific discipline.

In keeping with these concerns, you will find that the policy section of English, Intermediate Division, 1977 suggests that one teacher of English be responsible for the student's learning and progress in what should be an integrated English program. Further, it requires that for appreciably more than half of the class time devoted to English students themselves be actively involved in reading and writing activities.

The document is designed to encourage both principal and staff to initiate a language policy for the school, to recognize the importance of language throughout the curriculum, and to accept responsibility for improving language competence in their subject areas, thus making language development a day-long activity. It is also suggested that some purposeful out-of-class assignments be incorporated into the overall course plans.

Topics that should be covered at some time during the Intermediate Division are outlined in Part I, Policy (Program Summary: Key Elements).

The section in Part II on grammar and usage represents the result of prolonged discussion by the committee. It suggests a standard terminology - that of Quirk and Greenbaum. This terminology is acceptable to all educators, since it uses traditional terminology where appropriate and the more modern terminology of descriptive grammar where it seems to be more useful.

Accompanying this guideline is a resource unit Action/Adventure produced by the Writers' Development Trust, a non-profit corporation. This group has been working on a Canada-wide project involving the preparation of Canadian literature resource units for teachers. The units for the Intermediate Division were prepared by a team of teachers from Ontario. The Writers' Development Trust agreed to provide this material, Action/Adventure: A Resource Guide for the Teaching of Literature, at printing cost. A sufficient supply is available to accompany the new guideline. Additional copies must be purchased directly from the producers.

During the next year, a number of support documents to the Intermediate Division English guideline will be completed and mailed to school boards.

One linguist said of this guideline that it "imposes no limits on excellence but it does provide a spur for those who need it". We recognize that some aspects of the guideline will mean extra work and effort, especially the overall emphasis on student participation. However, we are confident that the advice provided by the teachers who wrote Part II: Resources, will prove helpful, and that the same spirit of co-operation that enabled us to prepare the guideline will, in the interests of all students, pervade our attempts to implement it.

John W. Storey
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The poem is included in the anthology *Kanata*, published by Methuen Publications, Agincourt, Ontario.

Preface

> Although the formal development of language skills is undertaken mainly by teachers of English, good standards of oral and written expression continue to be the responsibility of every teacher.
>
> *Circular H.S.1, 1977-78*

In light of the above, all teachers of English – as well as all teachers teaching in the English language – in the Intermediate Division* have a three-fold task:

- to familiarize themselves with the aims and expectations of *The Formative Years*, particularly those pertaining to listening, speaking, reading, and writing;
- to understand and implement the philosophy, aims, and expectations of this document, *English, Intermediate Division;*
- to familiarize themselves with the aims and expectations of *English, Senior Division.*

Important Note

The word *man* and the pronouns *he* and *his* are used generically in this document, and are intended to refer to and include students (or teachers or principals, where appropriate) of both sexes. At the same time, the third person singular has been avoided whenever it does not serve a pertinent function in the text; that is, it has been used only where it enhances clarity or retains focus on the individual.

**Intermediate Division* means the division of the organization of a school comprising the first four years of the program of studies immediately following the Junior Division. (The Education Act, 1974, Sec. 1 (1) 23)

Part I: Policy

Introduction

Language is a complex form of human behaviour resulting from the interaction of thought with experience, emotions, and the human desire to articulate ideas and feelings. Language is at the core of any culture; it is the key to full participation in that culture.

From the perspective of the student in the Intermediate Division, language is a process intimately linked with personal growth and the human need for communication. The ability to think abstractly, which is developing during the adolescent years, is aided by the acquisition of the language of hypothesis – the precise language skills used in formal reasoning, in the consideration and expression of alternative possibilities. The development of personal values and relationships is facilitated by exposure to the language and literature of argument, emotion, inner direction, and belief. The imagining of future adulthood is stimulated by the language of projection, feasibility, fantasy, creativity, and hope.

From the parents' perspective, language, when used appropriately and precisely, is a major source of power that children draw upon in their attempts to cope with the world around them, to learn, and to strive to accomplish the personal aims and goals they set, and to meet social and occupational responsibilities.

From society's perspective, the increasing complexity of life and technology, the larger numbers of students receiving post-secondary education or training, and the demands of government, social agencies, business, and industry for employees who can communicate effectively are factors indicating a need for a strong English program in our schools.

In most societies, a child acquires language in a setting in which he is surrounded by models of that language. In a developing, multicultural community such as Ontario, many children are growing up surrounded by adults who do not have full command of English. This means that the province's schools have both a difficult task and a strong role to play in helping our students develop language facility.

For many students in our schools, particularly schools in urban areas, the first language may not be English, or it may be a dialect of English. Long after they have finished with reception programs, English-as-a-Second-Language or English-as-a-Second-Dialect classes, such students will need a well-structured English program and extensive help from all teachers if they are to develop to the limits of their intellectual potential and become fully participating adults in this society.

Literature has the power to shape thought and understanding. The vicarious experience it offers is a subtle and powerful force in building the character of a nation and its people. As a record of life and experience, literature represents the best expression of what men and women have enjoyed or endured, have done, and have dreamed of doing.

Literature in the Canadian context is especially powerful, for it embraces the heritage of both traditional and contemporary English literature, the rich mythology and literature of the native peoples, the emotive literature that arises from the pioneer and immigrant experience, with the additional enrichment of translations from the many cultures that comprise the Canadian mosaic. It can lead to increased understanding between our many peoples and a deeper appreciation of each other's cultural experience.

For all of these reasons, it is imperative that our schools help all students in Ontario to develop a deep understanding and appreciation of the English language and literature, to acquire effective communication skills in standard Canadian English, to learn how to organize ideas in a logical manner, and to communicate clearly and effectively with others in both writing and speech.

In life it is almost impossible to use one aspect of language without involving another. Speaking and listening are often companion activities, and thinking should be basic to both. Reading without thoughtful involvement is an idle pastime. Talking about an enjoyed novel or story brings added appreciation. One can read without being a writer, but one cannot write without being a reader.

It follows, therefore, that the *basis of the compulsory English curriculum is an integrated balance of reading, writing, speaking, and listening,* and it is upon this foundation that courses should be based. The whole of education is a continuum; the objectives of the English program in the Intermediate Division are not fundamentally different from, but build upon, those of the divisions that precede it, and at the same time contribute to the objectives of the division that follows.

General Aims

1. To encourage the use of language as a means by which the individual understands personal and societal goals and acquires such qualities as initiative, responsibility, decisiveness, self-discipline, perceptiveness, and integrity in the pursuit of those goals;
2. to nurture the student's growth in awareness and appreciation of both personal identity and the diverse values of people as reflected in Canada's multicultural society and literature;
3. to promote the student's appreciation and enjoyment of literature and language;
4. to develop language proficiency by increasing the student's conscious understanding and practical application of the principles and processes by which language operates;
5. to increase the student's general use and mastery of language by developing the particular language skills required throughout the curriculum;
6. to familiarize the student with representative contemporary and classical works and the various literary genres;
7. to develop the student's critical skills and help him apply them in responding to material transmitted through the various media.

The Principal and the English Program

Recognizing that the English language plays a basic role in all teaching and learning in the school, the effective principal accepts certain responsibilities:

- recognizes the role that language plays in all areas of the curriculum and provides the initiative for a school language policy;
- ensures the implementation of these guidelines within the school, in consultation with staff and any available resource personnel;
- allocates resources (time, personnel, facilities, materials, money) to the English program in just proportion to the number of students involved and its paramount importance in the total curriculum;
- insists that *all* teachers be familiar with these guidelines, that they understand the role that language plays in all areas of the curriculum, and that they recognize their role in language development in their particular subject fields;
- encourages studies and pursuits, professional and private, that foster the proficiency of all staff in oral and written English;
- ensures that there is communication and a positive exchange of ideas between elementary and secondary personnel in both Junior and Senior divisions;
- makes administrative decisions, related to timetabling and reporting, that are supportive of the *integrated* English programming required to achieve the aims of this guideline;
- evaluates the school's English program on a continuous basis and initiates changes for improvement in consultation with the staff responsible for the program.

The Role of the Teacher in the English Program

The effective teacher of English accepts certain responsibilities:

- assesses the stage of development of each child and on the basis of this assessment determines the forms of instruction appropriate for him;
- plans language experiences carefully (taking into account the students' development, interests, and needs, both personal and academic), establishes priorities, considers materials, activities, time, and facilities, as well as grouping possibilities;
- stimulates the students' interest in language;
- generates intellectual involvement and enthusiasm for excellence;
- listens, observes, and creates a climate in which students can best develop their skills, take calculated risks, and practise all forms of orderly communication;
- participates actively in students' language experiences, supporting positive attempts, clarifying, pointing up alternatives, etc.;
- is one of the authorities on English to whom students can turn for information;
- uses precise and effective English, and is seen by students to appreciate language, while refraining from imposing personal value systems and tastes;
- assumes all of these roles, growing with experience and making increasingly effective use of support personnel, professional reading, courses, and association with other teachers.

Program Policy: Key Elements

The program outlined on the following pages provides a basis upon which mandatory courses should be designed for the general student – that is, the student who plans to leave school for a community college or the world of work after obtaining the Secondary School Graduation Diploma. It is anticipated that modifications will be necessary to meet the needs of the basic level (occupational) student. Extensions and additional challenge will be needed for the advanced or enriched-level student who is university-bound. As in the past, many students will continue to take additional courses designed to meet specific needs, such as remedial reading, or courses designed to meet specific interests and aptitudes, such as those derived from the guidelines *Dramatic Arts* or *Screen Education in Ontario*.

1. This guideline supersedes the previous guideline designated *English, Intermediate Division, 1969.*
2. Every student will have an appropriate English course as part of his program in every year of the Intermediate Division, that is, in Grades 7, 8, 9, and 10.
3. Boards and schools will continue to offer English courses for credit at *basic, general, advanced,* and *enriched* levels, to meet a variety of student needs.
4. Every student will be expected to take courses that challenge the limits of personal ability.
5. The principal, after consultation with staff, students, and parents (in the case of students under 18), should make explicit recommendations regarding student placement. Parents who do not wish to accept these recommendations must sign a written statement accepting responsibility for their action.
6. English programs based upon this guideline and intended to meet the mandatory credit requirements must be *integrated* programs – that is, they must comprise a blend of reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
7. Such programs should reflect the principle that language development takes place primarily through the *use* of language, rather than through theoretical studies concerning it. *Appreciably more than half of classroom time* should be devoted to providing students with opportunities to be actively involved in personal reading and writing, rather than in formal exercises *in vacuo* or teacher-directed discussions centring on literary criticism.
8. Boards wishing to offer *second-credit* courses focusing on one or more aspects of this guideline may do so; however, such additional courses would not satisfy the mandatory core English requirement.
9. Most students in the Intermediate Division will be expected to undertake some out-of-class English assignments, or homework. This independent work should be considered an integral component of the overall course work and should be planned as such. At the same time, in planning such assignments in English the teacher should take into account the load a student is carrying in other subject areas.

10. There must be consultation and co-operation among all teachers in the Intermediate Division to ensure that there is a continuum from Grades 7 to 10.
11. All teachers should familiarize themselves with appropriate evaluation procedures (see the section on evaluation).
12. Students must be made aware of the objectives of the program and the relationship of language to their daily lives and all other present and future learning.
13. Selection of texts will continue to be made from *Circular 14*. The choice of supplementary reading material will continue to be a local board responsibility.

Objectives

Although the objectives that follow are related specifically to thinking, speaking, reading, writing, and valuing, it should be understood that in an integrated, balanced language program *they all form essential elements of each of the aims articulated on page 5 of this document.*

Programs developed at the local level should provide each student with opportunities to achieve the levels of competence and the forms of growth and development indicated in this document. Such programs should allow individual students to move beyond these expectations without subjecting those who cannot reach them to loss of self-esteem or confidence. In addition, the programs should be flexible enough to accommodate any modifications that may be necessary to meet the needs of students with learning or other disabilities.

The program will provide each student in the Intermediate Division with the opportunity to:

Think

- *think about experiences, ideas, and feelings with increasing clarity, logic, and sensitivity;*
- develop powers of observation and recall;
- comprehend and analyse what is being communicated;
- formulate and respond to questions of varying depth or range;
- gather or research, interpret, integrate, and design and present ideas or information;
- make inferences and develop logical trains of thought;
- assess the relevance and credibility of evidence;
- synthesize disparate pieces of information for a purpose;
- recognize the role that knowledge, logic, intuition, and feeling play in the process of thinking or problem-solving;
- understand the role of the media (film, radio, television, newspapers, journals) in the shaping of thought, attitudes, and habits;
- begin to develop a personal stock of criteria for evaluating the ideas, procedures, and alternatives communicated by various means.

Listen

- *listen with sensitivity, understanding, and discrimination;*
- develop the powers of attention and concentration upon which successful listening depends;
- become increasingly aware of *how* something is said, as well as *what* is said;
- develop sensitivity to sound, becoming constantly and critically aware of the nuances of rational speech, expressive speech, music, and other sounds;
- develop greater sensitivity to, and appreciation of, the viewpoint of others;

– become increasingly aware of the relationship between listening and responding, through such activities as debate, dramatic dialogue, and discussions of all kinds;

– relate this awareness and discrimination to the media used for instructional or recreational purposes.

Speak

– *articulate ideas, thoughts, and feelings with confidence and clarity;*

– develop a growing competence in speech through such activities as discussion, debate, improvisation, panel discussion, role-playing, drama, and formal speaking;

– become increasingly aware of the importance of tonal aspects of speech;

– develop a growing appreciation of the relationship between speech and audience, and become increasingly adept at adapting speech to a particular audience;

– develop the ability to understand, empathize with, or paraphrase another person's point of view;

– grow in general awareness of the sociological aspects of speech.

Read

– *acquire the interests and attitudes of a maturing reader;*

– develop sufficient confidence to actively participate in a variety of reading tasks;

– continue to develop an understanding and enjoyment of many varieties of written language;

– develop personal reading interests and tastes.

Read

– *extend and refine personal use of reading/reasoning/language processes;*

– read a variety of materials with fluency and efficiency;

– focus attention on meaning;

– set appropriate purposes for reading;

– think while reading—for example, interpret, form mental images, discern cause and effect, main idea and detail, sequence;

– obtain and use information proficiently, checking it for bias, relevance, and accuracy;

– follow increasingly complex syntax and organizational patterns with fluency.

Read

– *extend and consolidate vocabulary and word skills outlined for the Junior Division in "The Formative Years";*

– recognize on sight most words appropriate to personal level;

– use reference works such as the dictionary and encyclopedia to unlock (read and understand) new words;

– demonstrate a precise understanding of the denotation, as well as interest in the connotations, of words encountered in reading;

– use a thesaurus appropriately.

Read

– *develop control over personal reading rate;*

– read at speeds that are adequate for comprehension and appropriate to the purpose and the type of material being read.

Write

– *use writing skills commensurate with physical, intellectual, and emotional maturity;*

– demonstrate an expanding vocabulary, increased proficiency in spelling and punctuation, and precision in language usage;

– demonstrate in writing an increasing competence in the use of the conventions of standard written English;

– acquire a deeper understanding of both the denotative and connotative function of words and apply this growing understanding to writing;

– develop an increasing sensitivity to the colour and vigour that can be achieved through the use of figurative language;

– develop the skills of accurate observation and reporting;

– develop an appreciation of personal observations, experiences, ideas, and feelings as potential resources for writing;

– write about these experiences, ideas, and feelings with increasing clarity, logic, and sensitivity;

– experience the joy of creativity;

– demonstrate a growing proficiency in collecting, organizing, and presenting information in a coherent and appropriate form;

– gain, through practice, advice, and encouragement, a growing competence in various forms of writing, both functional and creative, such as diaries, journals, letters; expository, narrative, or descriptive paragraphs; scripts, poems, or stories;

– develop the ability to vary style and language level (register) to suit a variety of purposes;

– perform with increasing precision and clarity such school language tasks as taking and making notes, writing reports, and answering examination questions;

– become aware of the usefulness, for reference purposes, of books on English usage;

– recognize the importance of legible handwriting in a presentation; develop a legible form of handwriting commensurate with psycho-motor skills.

Write

– *recognize and appreciate models of writing;*

– infer principles of language structure and usage from personal writing and literary models;

– develop skill in adapting language to a specific purpose and audience so that the writing may achieve maximum impact;

– understand some of the forces (such as the media) that work for or against change in English usage.

Write

– *recognize and appreciate the function of review, revision, and assessment in the process of improving written work;*

– gain, through editing, increasing competence in determining the voice, the syntactic structures, and the writing style most appropriate for a particular purpose;

– assess, through interaction with teachers and peers, the organization and quality of written expression;

– develop increasing sensitivity to the functions of language patterns which help one to classify, organize, summarize, interpret, synthesize, hypothesize, present, or assess written expression;

– begin to acquire (having first recognized the functions) a simple descriptive terminology[1] that will facilitate the giving and receiving of feedback concerning usage;

– focus on ways of discovering and describing relationships, as opposed to the rote-memorization of definitions.

Value

– *appreciate the role and value of language and literature in one's life;*

– develop an appreciation of the role that language plays in developing perception and understanding of the world;

– develop awareness of the relationship between thought and language;

– gain, through language and literature, insights that enable one to build a sense of identity, purpose, self-worth, and satisfaction;

– grow in understanding of one's cultural heritage within the context of Canada's multicultural society;

– understand persons belonging to other social and cultural groups as well as to one's own;

– recognize the riches that literature and language hold for personal growth and value them for their power to provide vicarious experience, to shed light on interpersonal relationships, and to extend and deepen personal awareness;

– begin to see language and literature as a means whereby intellectual, moral, and social values can be explored;

– conceive of learning as a lifelong experience in which language and literature, regardless of the medium through which they are presented (print, film, television), play a major part;

– become aware of the many ways in which language and literature can enrich life, recognizing that the power of language may be used both *for* and *against* one, and that it is useful to remain linguistically fit.

1. See Part II: Resources, p. 66.

Language in the Intermediate Division

> Education has the dual power to cultivate and to stifle creativity. Recognition of its complex tasks in this domain is one of the most fruitful intellectual achievements of modern psychopedagogical research. These tasks may be described as preserving each individual's originality and creative ingenuity without giving up the need to place him in real life; transmitting culture without overwhelming him with ready-made models; encouraging him to make use of his gifts, aptitudes and personal forms of expression without cultivating his egotism; paying keen attention to each person's specific traits without overlooking the fact that creation is also a collective activity.
>
> – Edgar Faure et al., *Learning to Be* (Paris: Unesco; Toronto: O.I.S.E., 1973).

The Intermediate Division differs from the Junior Division in that there is often more compartmentalization of subjects. Students are presented with opportunities to pursue new subjects, interests, and ideas. Nevertheless, students may feel that they have had English before and that it is not going to contain anything new or interesting. A first task for English teachers, therefore, is to clarify for students what the subject is, what the objectives are, what their work in the classroom will be, and generally to stimulate renewed interest.

Students must be led to think objectively about their language, to raise questions, and to search for answers. In this way they can be helped to improve the effectiveness of their use of language; to study language changes and differences; to develop an understanding of language and how it works; and thus to gradually improve their overall linguistic ability.

In a province enriched by so many immigrants who speak languages other than English and so many students who are learning French, teachers should remember that whatever second language a student speaks or is familiar with is an important basis or asset for work in English (especially for the presentation of significant concepts in grammar or linguistics).[2]

The language of daily life that students bring to the school has been shaped by their background; they use it without much conscious reasoning, knowing what is right for their community without being able to tell why. The linguist Kenneth Goodman puts it this way: "A great deal of everyday communication is carried on with trite expressions, used in trite ways, reflecting the degree to which language has become the automatic reaction to repetitious situations."[3]

On the other hand, some of the language of the school and learning arises from the need to pass on new skills and organized knowledge. This language is conscious and explicit; the school must provide for its acquisition in pedagogically sound ways.

As children mature, their ability to conceptualize and think in metaphors and abstractions increases. Two parallel and paradoxical trends are discernible. On the one hand, partly from their growing

2. H.A. Gleason, Jr., *Linguistics and English Grammar* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965), p. 485.
3. E.B. Smith, K.S. Goodman, and R. Meredith, *Language and Thinking in the Elementary School* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. 25.

recognition of the *power* of words, and partly from their desire to reject existing adult values and attitudes, adolescents have a penchant for using or developing fads in language usage. From generation to generation, this pattern of slang use is a more or less permanent characteristic of the adolescent stage in life history. In recent years, however, the use of particular fads has become more widespread, due to the impact of such media as film, radio, and television.

At a deeper and more personal level, a second trend is identifiable as students grow older: they have the potential for more effective use of language. They tend to use more language, longer and more complex sentences, to express more tentativeness, more supposition, more hypothesis, and more conditionality. Basically, the more effective users of language tend to use the same structural patterns as others, but more varied and complex "fillers".[4]

Throughout the process of language acquisition we can identify four components of an ever-developing spiral: increasing experience, increasing conceptualization, increasing communicative need, and increasing effectiveness in communication.

The main difference in the students' thinking at this stage from that at other stages is that now they can think beyond present tasks and form theories;[5] they can deal with propositions, probabilities, correlations, permutations, and aggregations. They can set up factors to be investigated, interrelating or separating them as need be; they can hold several factors in mind while considering others. The deductive process, as well as the inductive process, is open to them. The students' need to relate constantly to the concrete does not seem to be as essential as in the preceding stage. Combining matter already known with new conjectures can be done by language alone, *provided the referents remain clear.*[6]

Adherents of Piaget may argue with those of Vygotsky[7] over the value of self-discovery before adult language is introduced to children in the Primary or Junior divisions. By the Intermediate Division, however, Goodman's middle position is educationally more useful: "The collective language of the adults in a society is as potent a factor in the development of thinking as the child's own spontaneous formation of structures of relationships drawn from experience."[8]

An implication of such a position is that in addition to stretching "children's thinking horizontally in the stage they are in, as well as leading them vertically toward the stage that is coming",[9] the teacher's role is to be a model of effective language.

No statement on language policy in the Intermediate Division can omit reference to the teaching of grammar. This guideline advocates the presentation of grammar as the development of an understanding of language as living patterns, and not as a closed set of largely disconnected rules.

This can be accomplished by using an eclectic approach, culling some of the many valuable principles and strategies of the *descriptive* grammars and using the best insights of scholarship to meet the students' differing

4. Walter Loban, *The Language of Elementary School Children* (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1963), pp. 81-89.
5. Robert Thomson, *The Psychology of Thinking* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1959), p. 100.
6. Smith, *Language and Thinking*, p. 126.
7. L. Desjarlais and J.A. Rackauskas, *Needs and Characteristics of Students in the Intermediate Years, Ages 12-16* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa, 1974), p. 183.
8. K.S. Goodman in *Language and Thinking*, p. 116.
9. Ibid., p. 119.

needs for structure at appropriate points in their training. Understanding of relationship and function should grow out of use and should precede terminology. Students can be helped to progress gradually through the following stages:

1. to become aware of, and improve, their general linguistic ability through their use of language;

2. to become aware of, and study, on an *ad hoc* basis, levels or varieties of usage;

3. to study more systematically language changes and differences, such as those attributable to time, region, social situation, or the influence of other languages;

4. to become aware of, and use, the descriptive terminology[10] necessary for the giving and receiving of effective feedback;

5. to study language, on an informal or occasional basis, using descriptive grammar;

6. to begin a systematic study of descriptive grammar.

Among the many briefs presented to the Minister of Education at the time of the Intermediate Cyclic Review was one from the Ontario Council of Teachers of English. Included in this brief was a suggestion that a committee of teachers and scholars be appointed for the purpose of identifying and outlining a program of language study that would affect the way the student uses language to listen speak, read/write, observe/perform, as well as the way a student thinks about language when he values, judges, and criticizes language use, especially the language of literature. It is hoped that the program outlined here will do just that.

10. See Part II: Resources, p. 66.

Grade 7: The Foundation

> *Expansion* is the key word in the language program; expansion of communication need, expansion of experience, expansion of confidence in the use of language, expansion of conceptual ability, expansion of vocabulary, expansion of the range of language that is understood, expansion of the range of language used in expression and the ability to communicate with many different people. A time-honored adage of education is that it must always start where the child is.
>
> – Smith, *Language and Thinking in the Elementary School.*

In the Primary and Junior years, the child has received an education centred upon emerging needs and personality. The Intermediate years will continue to provide opportunities for experimentation, exploration, expansion, and practice, but will also include opportunities for studying English as a formal discipline. Much of the program in Grade 7 and in the Intermediate years that follow will emphasize language skills of a public and social nature. However, *these skills are not to be viewed in isolation:* the teacher must understand that the private, developing, personal world of the student cannot be ignored, that the student's need to grow in sensitivity must be nurtured.

Because students entering their first year of the Intermediate Division will be at various levels of accomplishment in language skills, each program should be designed with this variable in mind. *At this stage, the use of much specific terminology may not always be appropriate,* but the teacher will soon recognize at what level his students operate and determine whether special help is needed. If it is needed, the teacher will know how much terminology may usefully be introduced and in what manner it should be presented. *Understanding of function and relationship should precede use of terminology.*

Although the core of the Grade 7 program is an integrated balance of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, the teacher must recognize the need for a greater emphasis on writing and reading. *Appreciably more than half of the time allotted to English should be spent on developing appropriately the skills of writing and reading.* The balance of time should be available for other activities that the teacher considers fundamental to the student's continuing growth in English and his further education.

The main aim is to educate students who not only can but also want to – and do – read, write, speak, and listen well. The teaching of skills must never crowd out the act of using the skills; a balance must be maintained.

The advice given in the later sections (Reading; Development of Writing Abilities; Grammar and Usage; Spelling; Literature; Listening, Speaking, and Drama; Evaluation) will prove useful in implementing the specific aims of a balanced English program and in creating courses that recognize the diversity of attainment among students (basic, general, advanced, enriched).

Grades 8 and 9: Consolidation and Future Goals

The intervening years, Grades 8 and 9, are years of consolidation, expansion, and further discovery for the student and the teacher. A desirable foundation has already been set down; future goals can be perceived.

In order to set realistic objectives, the teacher must know what has been taught in the preceding year and what the anticipated goals are for the year to follow. *Consultation among teachers, therefore, becomes essential before the teacher designs a course that integrates the foundation with new material.* Furthermore, taking into account factors related to the social, physical, emotional, and cognitive development of children, *teachers should draw from the various areas of this guideline whatever material is suited to the needs and abilities of their students.*

At this level students should be capable of exercising some ability in correcting spelling, punctuation, and usage, and also in improving, by revision, drafts of their own writing. They should feel that what they have to say is worthwile and understand that to say it effectively they will need to write with clarity, order, economy, and vividness. They should be able to express themselves in a variety of situations and on a variety of topics. Their reading should be purposeful, eclectic, and addictive.

To a large extent learning success in these intervening years will be measured by the students' preparedness to continue with their education. The teacher's evaluation will take into account the realistic objectives that he has set for his students (see Part II: Resources, p.106). The percentage of time allocated for reading and writing activities should again be appreciably more than half of the total time allotted to English.

Grade 10: The Final Year

On entering Grade 10, the student embarks on the final year of the Intermediate Division. This, therefore, becomes a year of synthesis, as well as a year responsive to maturing interests and abilities. In addition, like all other school years, it should be one of expansion and fresh discovery. The teacher's program will seek to combine these characteristics. It will also recognize:

- *the reasonable expectations of the community;*
- *the need to establish a satisfactory level of achievement for young people who wish to terminate their formal education at the end of this year;*
- *the need to provide an essential foundation for future study in the Senior Division;*
- the need to ensure that the proportion of program time spent on reading and writing remains appreciably more than half.

By the end of Grade 10, discrepancies between the academic achievement of one student and another are becoming more evident. Educators argue about what makes one student in a class better at English than another. Is it a more extensive vocabulary, more competence in sentence generation, greater concentration, more interest, more creativity, a richer cultural heritage, more intensive or extensive teaching along the way? Is it one or all, or some combination of these factors? What makes a student better at English in Grade 10 than he was in Grade 7? Is it three more years of practice, additional teaching, or a growing sense of purpose? Or is it just the greater maturity that comes with three additional years of living?

In answering these questions educators should, for maximum effectiveness, look to those factors over which the school does have control: the program, teaching methods, hours of instruction, number of students per class, and general school climate for learning.

By the conclusion of the Intermediate Division, three patterns of communication – instinctive, social, and intellectual – will have been explored, with an emphasis appropriate to the level of the class.

Program Summary

The chart that follows (see pages 21-23) is an outline or summary of language processes, ideas, or skills for which learning opportunities must be provided within the Intermediate Division program. It is intended as a teacher *planning guide*, not as a checklist of skills to be mastered by *every* student. The topics are not listed in any particular order or sequence.

All teachers of English in the Intermediate Division should be familiar with the techniques used to teach these topics, either on an *ad hoc* or a systematic basis. It is conceivable, for example, that some students in a secondary school *basic* level course may still require help with some word attack skills that students in *general* or *advanced* level courses are using with facility.

Teachers in each grade must interpret the chart according to the achievement levels, needs, and abilities of their students, modifying or enlarging requirements in consultation with other teachers to avoid repetition. They will select from the chart appropriate material for the particular grade and level, building upon the accomplishment of the preceding year.

Questions pertaining to the rate at which a sound language study program should be introduced, the material to be selected for literature study, the methodology to be used, and so on, should be considered within the context of community needs and preferences. For this reason, these aspects of the program will continue to be a local board responsibility.

Board officials, teachers, and others will be guided in their selection by:

- the grade descriptions that accompany this chart;
- the basic objectives of the curriculum;
- the advice given in Part II of this document.

> English is above all a *personal* discipline, concerned with personal behaviour and personal choices and tastes. The receptive linguistic skills, listening, and reading, are aspects of personal behaviour: one's efficiency in both varies with one's mood, situation and power of will, and grows as one matures through innumerable private and personal experiences. The productive skills, speaking and writing, have both personal and social functions, but they also improve through constant personal efforts. Fundamentally English teaching is not only dispensing knowledge or demonstrating techniques, though these have a part to play: it is devising and shaping situations that will induce growth. And it is not only growth in *skills* that we must nourish, but also growth in sensitivity, in awareness of the nature, feelings and purposes of oneself and of others. Hence in the English classroom, more than anywhere else, the pupils should be aware of themselves, their relationship with the world around them and its relationship with the world inside themselves. From the imaginative creations of others, the literature and drama they experience, they should derive knowledge of life and its problems and how others fare with them. From their own creations, their discussions and their personal experience, their knowledge, opinions and feelings can be shaped and focussed and made meaningful.
>
> – Scottish Education Department, Central Committee on English, *Bulletin No. 3: English for the Young School Leaver* (Edinburgh: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1970).

Summary of Language Processes, Ideas, Skills

Speaking

Topics or Skills

Understanding
- Enunciation
- Pronunciation
- Projection
- Articulation
- Tonality and Inflection
- Unity
- Coherence
- Diction
- Paraphrase

Listening Effectively
Chairing, Participating, Moderating
Supporting and Clarifying
Questioning
Summarizing
Applying Skills
Recognizing Dialect and Language Communities
Using Microphones
Making Tape Recordings of Speech

Suggested Vehicles

Spontaneous Talk
Interactive Discussion
Role-Playing
Interviews
Announcements
Recitation
Puppetry
Dramatization
Oral Reading
Improvisations
Telephoning
Story-Telling
Interest Talks
Introductions
Commentaries
Public Speaking
Panel Discussions
Debate

Listening

Topics or Skills

Expanding Vocabulary
Discerning Main Ideas
Noticing Specific Details
Understanding Sequence
Inferring
Comparing
Predicting
Questioning Critically
Determining Relevance
Differentiating Between Fact and Opinion
Detecting Propaganda Bias
Differentiating Between Emotional and Rational Language
Generalizing
Classifying
Appreciating
Applying Skills Learned
Chairing, Participating, Moderating

Suggested Vehicles

Spontaneous Talk
Interactive Discussion
Dramatic Dialogue
Role-Playing
Poetry
Prose
Interviews
Speeches
Lectures
Radio
Television
Films
Recordings
Telephone
Music
Dictation
Debate

Reading

Topics or Skills

Increasing Rate for and with Comprehension
Reading Intensively
Recognizing Author's Intention
Attending to Form and Format
Discerning Main Ideas
Developing Word Attack Skills
Extending Vocabulary
Recognizing Cause and Effect
Noticing Specific Details
Understanding Sequence
Comparing
Classifying
Predicting
Questioning Critically
Determining Relevance
Using Contextual Clues
Imagining
Inferring
Recognizing Prejudice, Propaganda, and Bias
Differentiating Between Fact and Opinion
Generalizing
Recognizing Abnormal Order
Appreciating
Applying Skills Learned
Understanding and Using Research Skills:
- Table of Contents, Index, Bibliography, Footnotes
- Library Cataloguing System, Vertical Files, Encyclopedias
- Audio-Visual Equipment
- Community and Human Resources

Recognizing and Applying Through the Study of Literature:
- Form
- Plot Development
- Characterization
- Plausibility
- Mood
- Point of View
- Tone: Irony, Humour, Sarcasm
- Theme
- Setting
- Persona
- Ambiguity
- Descriptive Terminology such as Metaphor, Soliloquy, Conflict, Climax, etc.
- Criticism and Appreciation of Author's Use of Techniques and Style

Suggested Vehicles

Novels
Biographies, Autobiographies, and Other Non-Fiction Prose
Short Stories
Fables, Legends, Myths
Poetry
Plays
Pamphlets
Essays
Magazines
Newspapers
Films
Television
Microfiches
Maps, Charts, Diagrams
Posters, Tables, Graphs
Cartoons
Crosswords, Anagrams

Writing

Topics or Skills

Expanding Vocabulary

Improving Spelling
- Word Patterns, Families, Basic Rules
- Root Words, Prefixes, Suffixes
- Syllabification
- Derivations
- Abbreviations
- Capitalization

Using the Dictionary, Thesaurus, and Reference Texts
- Antonyms and Synonyms
- Homonyms
- Denotation and Connotation
- Possessive Forms and Pluralization
- Principal Parts of Verbs
- Figurative Language
- Correct Usage

Developing Legible Handwriting

Developing Concepts of Functions of Major Parts of Speech, Phrases, and Clauses

Understanding Unity
- Topic Sentence
- Relevance of Details
- Statement of Thesis
- Singleness of Purpose
- Maintenance of Consistent Point of View

Developing Coherence and Emphasis
- Ordering: Logical, Chronological, Climactic
- Linking
- Concluding
- Using Sentence Variety: Function, Structure, Order
- Subordination

Developing Specific Skills:
- Synthesis
- Appropriate Language Levels
- Figurative Speech

Recognizing and Applying:
- Punctuation Roles
- Sentence Types
- Paragraph Structure
- Different Forms and Formats
- Correct Usage Rules such as Agreement of Verb, Tense, etc.
- Point of View (Spectator or Participant Roles)

Developing Research Skills:
- Paraphrasing and Précis Writing
- Outlining
- Responsible Use of Others' Material, Quoting, Documenting

Organizing Bibliographies and Footnotes

Extrapolating versus Plagiarising

Pre-planning, First Draft, Revision, Editing, and Polishing

Suggested Vehicles

Diaries
Journals
Pen Pals
Paragraphs
- Narrative
- Descriptive
- Expository

Letters
Poetry
Reports
Announcements
Dialogue for Scripts or Plays
Newspapers
Logs
Commentaries
Sound Tracks
Argument and Persuasion
Posters
Paraphrasing
Summarizing
Note-Taking
Dictation

Criteria for Program Evaluation

- Are all the aspects of English – thinking, listening, reading, writing, and valuing – integrated or linked in purposeful ways?
- Is there a balanced emphasis on each aspect? Is there a balance between *intensive* and *extensive* approaches?
- Is there a logical sequence of activities, with continuous reinforcement of existing skills and continual expansion or spiralling towards more advanced levels?
- Is the flexibility available being used wisely – to allow for materials more suited to the needs of a particular class or student?
- Does the program have a pattern or coherence that both *student* and *teacher* can recognize and appreciate?
- Does the program begin where the students are?
- Is provision being made for individual differences within the class?
- Is there a balance of individual, paired, small group, and large group activities?
- Does the teacher observe a careful balance in his various roles, or is there an emphasis on the resource or authority role?
- Is a variety of motivational techniques used?
- Is a variety of instructional approaches used?
- Does the same teacher teach all aspects of the mandatory English program to a given class?

Part II: Resources

Introduction

For the convenience of individual teachers who may wish, from time to time, to seek help with a particular area, each section of Part II: Resources focuses on a particular aspect of language or language study.

The philosophy and suggestions offered in each section do, however, reflect an integrated approach to language, and the existence of separate section headings should not be interpreted as denoting inconsistency with Part I of this document.

> The teacher is the pupils' model of good posture and grooming, clear speech, sound judgment, and gracious manners. He should be aware of his constant influence upon the interests, tastes, and personalities of his pupils. The measure of his success in the teaching of English will be in the interest of the pupils in good books, their powers of straight thinking, and their ability to speak and write clearly, naturally and sincerely, to read intelligently, and to appreciate the good things of life which are revealed to us through language....
>
> The teacher's first duty when meeting a new class is to discover the individual attainments of his pupils in reading.... Necessary practice, beginning slightly below the achievement level, should then be provided. Serious deficiencies require careful diagnosis followed by well-considered prescription and frequent practice.
>
> Since the pupil's success in any subject on the course of study depends largely upon his reading skill, all teachers should give attention to the special reading problems connected with their special subjects. The teacher of English should give extensive practice in the various types of reading – recreational, informative, reflective, and practical – in other subjects as well as in English literature to ensure that the pupils can apply their reading skills to a wide variety of problems and subject matter.
>
> – *Outlines of Courses for Experimental Use, Intermediate Division, Curriculum I:1, 1951.*

Reading

Principles of Reading and Reading Instruction

An effective reading program in the Intermediate Division will conform to the following principles:

1. *Promote integration*
   Reading is not an isolated language skill, but one facet of the individual's total language facility. It follows, therefore, that reading both contributes to and is enhanced by some of the other aspects of the language program – speaking, listening, writing, spelling, viewing, and discussing. Thus, the integration of the language arts in the English program is both necessary and desirable. At the same time, class time must be made available each day for extensive reading for pleasure in order to allow the natural development of reading fluency and efficiency through practice.

2. *Focus on the reading task*
   Comprehension of what is read can only be developed when the information to be conveyed is already partially known to the reader. In other words, the reader must possess language, information, and experience that can be applied to the matter read and utilized to unlock meaning. Since students in the Intermediate grades may not yet be adept at bringing their prior knowledge to bear on a reading selection, teachers must exercise great care to provide reading materials that lie just at the edge of the students' expanding knowledge, experience, and language abilities. Also, teachers must help students to recognize and use any prior knowledge that is pertinent to the reading task at hand.

3. *Make use of reading*
   Reading is never an end in itself. At times, specific instruction in reading strategies may be appropriate, but care must be taken to ensure that students understand the purposes of reading: pleasure, discovery, acquisition of vicarious experience, of knowledge, of information. In this regard, it is essential to help students develop and use reading strategies appropriate to subject areas other than English Studies, and to help them use the information resources of the library.

4. *Foster appropriate attitudes*
   The process of becoming a competent reader requires the development of certain attitudes on the part of the reader.

   a) Students must be helped to feel secure in the reading situation: they must feel safe enough to hazard a guess, to make mistakes, to correct themselves without fear of failure or ridicule. Readers who have been made anxious and insecure in their reading are greatly hindered in their progress.

   b) Students must be encouraged to participate actively in reading. They should learn to see reading not as a narrow search for correct answers to assigned questions, but as an inherently satisfying activity in which they constantly formulate hypotheses, sample the text, and confirm or correct their understanding. (Refer to items 2, above and 9, below, for the principles that help to ensure that the act of reading is more than a laborious process of finding the right answer.)

c) Students must be encouraged to take the attitude that the printed word is *transparent*; that is to say, they must be encouraged not so much to read the word as to read *through it*, and thus make the act of reading the creation of meaning and the processing of information, using the clues provided. Unless students develop this approach to reading, their reading skill will never rise above the level of decoding.

5. *Reinforce a positive self-image through reading*
Since a student's self-concept and reading ability are closely related, all reading activities must be designed to establish and reinforce in the student a positive self-image, one marked by self-respect and openness.

6. *Start at the student's level*
The major reading objective in the Intermediate grades is to help all students progress from whatever level of fluency and efficiency they have achieved during their first six years in school *towards* the level of fluency, efficiency, and flexibility that is the mark of a mature reader.

7. *Instruct students in the subskills as the need arises*
As students come up against difficulties in their reading, it is useful and appropriate to give instruction in subskills such as identifying the main idea, reading for detail, and making inferences. However, reading is not acquired merely through a sequential learning of the subskills: there should be more reading than talking about what has been read.

8. *Ensure that students read extensively*
It is imperative that students in the Intermediate grades be given extensive practice in reading for many purposes. The maxim that we learn to read by reading should be zealously applied during the Intermediate years, and the provision of extensive reading experience should be a major concern of the English program.

9. *Provide appropriate models of oral reading*
Reading comprehension is often aided when the material is read well orally. This is not to be interpreted to mean that students should be required to read aloud in front of the class with no preparation (this practice too often develops negative attitudes); rather, what is meant here is that the difficulties a reader is having in understanding a sentence may be resolved when the sentence is read aloud with correct use of pause, inflection, and emphasis. Similarly, many kinds of writing or particular passages can acquire more meaning for students if they are read well by the teacher or some other competent reader – for example, dialogue, subtle passages of narrative, descriptive, or expository prose, and especially forms of writing that were intended to be read aloud, including drama and much poetry. (Further discussion of the use of oral and enactive approaches can be found in the sections that deal with literature and drama.) By reading aloud to the class each day, the teacher can provide students with many valuable insights into how written language works. The teacher should provide appropriate models of oral reading not only because this is an appropriate teaching strategy for developing reading comprehension, but also because for Intermediate Division students the oral approach can act as a powerful motivating force.

10. *Develop the student's values and taste*
Moral and aesthetic sensitivity in reading is best developed when students are given opportunities to reflect on moral and aesthetic issues that they are able to relate to their own developing value systems.

Objectives

The student in the Intermediate Division will be given opportunities to:

1. *acquire the interests and attitudes of a maturing reader;*
   - develop sufficient confidence to assume responsibility for setting appropriate purposes for reading and for adapting reading strategies to the purpose and the material;
   - begin to develop an understanding and enjoyment of many varieites of written language;
   - develop personal reading interests and tastes.
2. *extend and refine use of reading/reasoning/language processes;*
   - read a variety of material with fluency and efficiency;
   - focus attention on meaning;
   - set appropriate purposes for reading;
   - think as he reads – interpret, form mental images, discern cause and effect, main idea and detail, sequence, etc.;
   - obtain and use information efficiently, checking it critically for bias, relevance, and accuracy;
   - follow increasingly complex syntax fluently.
3. *extend and consolidate vocabulary and word skills outlined for the Junior Division in "The Formative Years";*
   - recognize most words on sight;
   - use the context in which new words occur and reference works (the dictionary, thesaurus, and encyclopedia) to unlock meaning;
   - demonstrate a precise understanding of the denotation of words and an interest in the connotations of words.
4. *develop control over personal reading rate;*
   - read at speeds that are adequate for comprehension and appropriate to the reader's purpose and the type of material being read.

The Four Stages of Reading Development

The stages described below are not to be viewed as rigid stages that coincide with grade levels; rather, they are generalizations of stages of development through which many readers progress. The attributes listed in each stage are not distinct properties acquired in sequential order by the reader but clusters of characteristics which are likely to appear together at certain periods. Although their progress may not necessarily be very steady, students will not leap suddenly from one stage to the next, nor will they bypass a stage. Some students may exhibit attributes of more than one stage at the same time, and the teacher will have to adjust teaching-learning strategies to build on the strengths exhibited while overcoming weaknesses. Temporary plateaux can be expected at various points in the development of reading ability. Care must be taken to allow sufficient time and practice in each stage and thus ensure that students are ready to move on. The descriptions of the stages do not constitute a comprehensive guide; the astute teacher will examine every individual's reading habits and skills, as well as interests and attitudes, in order to design appropriate programs.

The characteristics described in Stage 4 are seldom observed together before the senior grades of high school; they are included here to indicate that some students may be ready, before the end of Grade 10, to benefit from the kinds of learning experiences suggested in Stage 4.

Stage 1

A Profile of Stage 1 Students

1. *Interests and attitudes*
   Students in this stage will have read few, if any, full-length books independently and with enjoyment; their background experience is thus likely to be limited.

   Feelings of fear, inadequacy, and frustration, particularly when reinforced by the peer group, frequently result in a dislike of reading. Many students, despite a negative attitude, desperately want to become fluent readers; others have not yet realized the need for reading in their lives (for learning, recreation, academic studies).

   Interest can be generated by the use of materials that have strong plot lines and external conflicts or that are closely related to the students' own experiences, fears, or concerns. Students are interested in the concrete and will not respond well to discussion or instruction that dwells too much on the abstract. Interest can only be maintained if experiences in class are pleasant and satisfying, and lead towards greater self-confidence and a positive self-concept. Full-length prose works (fiction and non-fiction) are more likely to maintain students' interest than short selections followed by questions and exercises. Other kinds of literature, such as poetry and plays, might best be approached through the speech, drama, and writing components of the program.

2. *Reading/reasoning/language processes*
   The act of reading is usually an arduous task, marked by lack of fluency and inefficiency in the use of context clues and prior knowledge. Undue effort is expended on the task of decoding, with the result that the overall meaning, its usefulness, and its relation to other knowledge are lost. Provided the material read presents situations or information already familiar, the teacher can direct the students into activities such as interpreting; envisaging; identifying cause and effect, main idea, and sequence; comparing; and classifying. Very little skill is shown in approaching complex syntactical forms such as subordination and the passive voice.

3. *Vocabulary*
   Listening vocabulary exceeds reading vocabulary. Ability to understand words on sight is limited both by a general paucity of stored meanings and a vague understanding of meanings, especially where abstractions are concerned. Looking up words in a dictionary is often still a fruitless exercise, as definitions cannot yet readily be understood. The use of context clues to determine word meaning is not yet a familiar strategy. Students show little interest in written words and derive little enjoyment from the study of words.

   Word attack skills: Some students may exhibit specific weaknesses in their understanding of, or ability to apply, word attack and word structure skills. Some individual remedial work may be called for; to a large extent, however, the spelling and writing programs should provide the necessary reinforcement.

4. *Rate*
   Students are overly concerned with surface features of the text and so are preoccupied with tasks such as word recognition; this inhibits their reading speed and comprehension. Inability to vary the reading rate occurs when word-by-word decoding takes precedence over reading for meaning. Attempts to read more quickly are hindered by lack of confidence.

Aims Appropriate for Stage 1 Students[1]

Learning experiences in Stage 1 will enable students to:

1. *Interests and attitudes*

   - read many fiction and non-fiction books that are in accordance with their reading ability, interests, experiences, and concerns;

   - develop greater self-confidence in reading, and a positive attitude towards it, through successful and enjoyable reading experiences.

2. *Reading/reasoning/language processes*

   - develop the ability to read for meaning rather than merely decode;

   - develop reading fluency in easy materials, using the strategy of predicting, confirming, and correcting naturally and easily.

3. *Vocabulary*

   - become proficient in the use of basic word attack skills and begin to show considerable competence in the use of word analysis and context clues to extend vocabulary;

   - begin to develop curiosity about words.

4. *Rate*

   - begin to develop the reasoning skills, ability to set purposes, and flexibility of rate needed for the reading of informational prose;

   - read at a rate adequate for comprehension.

Stage 2

A Profile of Stage 2 Students

1. *Interests and attitudes*
   The Stage 2 student has probably read a number of full-length books, and has likely outgrown certain types of materials, such as animal stories or serial adventure stories for boys and girls. Greater confidence in reading, together with a broader background of experience, leads to a willingness to approach different kinds of books and reading materials. Interest in fictional characters is developing, but a strong plot line is still essential to make reading satisfying. The internal conflicts of characters with whom students can identify are of considerable interest. This interest in character often manifests itself as interest in real personalities; magazines and biographies are, therefore, appropriate materials. Individual interests are now more fully developed, and the student is generally willing to read large amounts of factual data related to some specific interest. Reading becomes a means of understanding one's own problems and of testing, in imagination, the limits of one's courage, endurance, resourcefulness, and so on.

1. Secondary school students wishing to proceed to the Secondary School Graduation Diploma may need to develop reading competence well beyond this level in order to work successfully in all the required subject areas.

Needs that cannot be met by factual materials can often be satisfied by poetry and drama, especially when appropriate oral and enactive strategies are used.

2. *Reading/reasoning/language processes*
   The student is now able to read a variety of materials with fluency and efficiency, at a level of difficulty appropriate to his skills. Abstract ideas are manageable only when they are closely related to concrete reality and the student's own experiences. Organizational skills may not be strong. The complex syntactical structures used in various prose materials and poetry continue to seriously interfere with the comprehension process.

3. *Vocabulary*
   Listening vocabulary still exceeds reading vocabulary. Context clues, as a strategy to discover word meanings, are applied in relatively simple or concrete situations. The increase in stored word meanings, aided by this growing facility in the use of context clues, is considerable. This body of stored meanings may include sizeable special vocabularies in the various disciplines and the student's areas of special interest. The use of a dictionary, thesaurus, or other reference work, as a conscious and deliberate strategy for discovering word meanings, is not yet established. Interest in words tends towards the unusual, the impressive, or the bizarre, with little focus on refinements of meaning or connotative meanings. The understanding of prefixes, suffixes, compound words, and variant endings, and the ability to combine this understanding appropriately with context clues are approaching consolidation.

4. *Rate*
   Reading rate may still be too slow for efficiency, but is approaching 180-225 words per minute in materials that are at the student's independent or recreational reading level. An effort is being made to derive meaning from units larger than single words. Confidence is sufficient to permit limited experimentation with variations in rate for different purposes; some flexibility in rate is developing naturally (skimming, scrutinizing), but instruction is needed to raise awareness of the fact of variable speeds.

Aims Appropriate for Stage 2 Students

Learning experiences in Stage 2 will enable students to:

1. *Interests and attitudes*

   - gain extensive experience of various forms of written communication, including many full-length books;
   - develop the attitude that reading is a viable form of
     - enjoying leisure time
     - acquiring information
     - understanding oneself in relation to others.

2. *Reading/reasoning/language processes*

   – improve the ability to perceive the meaning of units of increasing size – paragraphs, multi-paragraph passages, etc.;

   – improve the ability to handle varied and complex syntactical structures;

   – continue to develop skills related to formal abstract reasoning such as classifying, discriminating between major and minor ideas, generalizing, comparing, justifying inferences, etc.

3. *Vocabulary*

   – extend vocabulary by utilizing context clues in conjunction with mastered word-attack skills and by improving skill in the use of dictionaries and other vocabulary-building reference books.

4. *Rate*

   – continue to increase their personal reading rate and thus improve comprehension of recreational materials;

   – increase ability to vary reading rate according to purpose.

Stage 3

A Profile of Stage 3 Students

1. *Interests and attitudes*
   The Stage 3 student is willing and able to read – without too much difficulty and with good comprehension – a wide range of novels and books of current interest. (In fiction, for instance, interest is no longer restricted to novels that mirror the life of the adolescent, but extends to to a widening range of concerns.) Emotional involvement and rich subjective response may now be habitual, but objective understanding and reasoning are not readily attained with some materials. Materials that present strong plot lines and character conflicts are still essential, but now point of view and author bias are more easily perceived. In addition, Stage 3 students are ready to examine major concepts of plot, character, and theme as these relate to their own understanding of life. Interest extends now to a wide variety of materials, many of which are read and valued for their own sake. Reading instruction at this level should challenge students to move from the concrete and known to the abstract and unknown.

2. *Reading/reasoning/language processes*
   Most materials likely to be given to students can be read with both fluency and efficiency. Abstract thinking and reasoning skills are still being developed and still require teacher direction or assistance. In particular, students require instruction that aims to enhance the habit of active questioning and critical thinking while reading. Most syntactical difficulties can be overcome by the students' readiness to adjust their reading methods: students are willing to get general meaning from a first reading of a difficult passage and then reread the passage to work out the meaning of sections that were not understood on the first reading.

3. *Vocabulary*
   Listening and reading vocabularies are approximately equal. Dictionary skills and the use of context clues are approaching consolidation. The student is willing to experiment with multiple meanings, new words, and the creative use of words. Competence in the use of specialized vocabularies and abstract terminology is increasing steadily.

4. *Rate*
   Reading rate in materials suited to independent or recreational reading is often 250-350 words per minute. Rate is often deliberately changed to suit the difficulty of the material and the purpose for reading. A consistent effort is made to build meaning from large units rather than focus on single words, phrases, or sentences. The student is confident in his ability to change rates according to the needs of the moment.

Aims Appropriate for Stage 3 Students

Learning experiences in Stage 3 will enable students to:

1. *Interests and attitudes*
   - read widely both in class and in leisure time;
   - study some material intensively so that:
     - they may become involved in the content and form of works not readily accessible to them because the concepts and language are unfamiliar (e.g., Elizabethan literature);
     - they may begin to interpret the content and structure of works using a frame of reference (e.g., the concept that there are four ways in which words can be used to build meaning – sense, mood, tone, intent).
2. *Reading/reasoning/language processes*
   - expand their ability as questioning readers;
   - continue to refine the skills of abstract reasoning and critical thinking by dealing with a work in its entirety;
   - begin to respond to materials that are less stereotyped in content in an increasingly reflective and objective way by examining and comparing various interpretations of the text;
   - experiment with language creatively and become increasingly responsive to the impact of language used in unusual ways.
3. *Vocabulary*
   - continue to extend and refine their knowledge of words and their meanings.
4. *Rate*
   - vary their reading rate with skill and efficiency, in keeping with the requirements of a wide range of materials and purposes.

Stage 4

A Profile of Stage 4 Students

1. *Interests and attitudes*
   The Stage 4 student has read widely, and consciously applies this wealth of background experience to each new reading experience. Interests are becoming quite refined in that the student has developed personal reading tastes and searches out materials that stimulate and challenge perceived needs. Subtleties of humour and complexities of symbolism pose little difficulty for the Stage 4 student. He realizes the value and power of reading in his life. Reading can now become the avenue for probing philosophical issues that concern mankind: the nature of justice, human discontent, the implications of death, the ideals of love, peace, and so forth.

2. *Reading/reasoning/language processes*
   The student is capable of enjoying and reading with ease a wide range of materials at a mature reading level. Reasoning ability is approaching the level at which abstract concepts can be manipulated comfortably and at times independently. Reading is a highly active and creative act, engaging the full range of imagination and reasoning ability developed to this point. Syntax poses a problem only in highly idiosyncratic styles and specialized materials.

3. *Vocabulary*
   Reading vocabulary may exceed listening vocabulary. Growing sensitivity to the nuances of diction enhances all the reading undertaken. The student develops an interest in words for their own sake, on the one hand learning to relish language and to enjoy the pleasures it affords, on the other hand developing an understanding of and respect for the power of language.

4. *Rate*
   Reading rate in recreational materials is high – 300 words per minute or more. Meaning is derived from larger contextual units. Adjustment of rate to suit material and purpose has become an habitual response.

Aims Appropriate for Stage 4 Students

Learning experiences in Stage 4 will enable students to:

1. *Interests and attitudes*

   – come to see themselves as lifetime readers for whom reading is an essential part of a fulfilling life.

2. *Reading/reasoning/language processes*

   – become independent in using the various processes of critical reading and begin to apply them automatically as they approach materials of different types;

   – continue to refine the abstract thinking skills required to examine and relate written works to the larger body of literary, historical, and scientific thought;

   – refine the ability to respond consciously and sensitively to diction, highly idiosyncratic styles of writing, and unusual or very complex syntax.

3. *Vocabulary*

   – develop a lasting interest in acquiring new vocabulary.

Readers Below the Stage 1 Level

Experience suggests that virtually all students who reach Grade 7 can read to some degree. Their abilities vary widely and most are accounted for in the four-stage structure described on the preceding pages. However, there are some students who, although they can read, have not yet succeeded in developing the strategies or skills needed to function satisfactorily at the Stage 1 level. Various remedial and booster programs are essential for these pre-Stage 1 readers. Such programs would capitalize on the language strengths the students exhibit and move from these to the strategies and techniques of the Stage 1 level; in this way, a student might proceed from a language-experience approach to the independent reading program aimed at in Stage 1. It is important to realize that although these students

are not at the Stage 1 level when they enter the Intermediate Division, they can read certain types of material and therefore are not to be regarded as non-readers.

The Non-Reader

There are a few students who reach Grade 7 still unable to read anything but the most basic elements of print. It is likely that these students have already been accommodated in special programs. The principles of reading and reading instruction should be applied in these cases, along with other principles and strategies that relate to the particular needs of these students.

Implementation and Organizational Strategies

Schools must recognize certain realities with regard to reading competencies in the Intermediate grades. Reading competence is a developmental process that proceeds at different rates for individual students. Hence it follows that:

1. the students in each year of the Intermediate grades will read at widely varying levels (see Stages 1-4). Many students will enter Grade 7 functioning at a Stage 1 level; others – the very exceptional students – may be nearing a Stage 3 level of functioning. It is also predictable that some students will not have progressed much beyond Stage 1 even by the end of Grade 10.
2. since reading competence grows incrementally, *students can profit from instruction only if it is appropriate to their existing level of functioning.*
3. while a student's progress through the stages of reading competence can be greatly facilitated by appropriate teaching, it is necessary that adequate time, practice, and experience be provided at each stage.

Therefore, schools are required to respond to the needs and abilities of *individual* children. With reference to reading competencies, such a response will necessitate a variety of organizational structures, course offerings, grouping arrangements, and other such provisions.

In Grades 7 and 8, a school may employ various organizational strategies in its attempt to respond appropriately to the needs of students at different levels of reading competence; for example:

- in-class grouping for parts of the English program, with differentiated assignments and activities for children at various stages;

- special booster programs for students from other parts of the English-speaking world to familiarize them with the conventions and vocabulary of standard Canadian English;

- special programs for students requiring instruction in English as a second language, including "bridging" programs between ESL and regular English programs;

- additional, specialized instruction (over and above the time and work of the regular English program) for weak readers. The teacher could work with students individually or in small groups to enrich and extend reading and literacy competencies.

It is important to note that many children who enter Grade 7 at a Stage 1 level of competence do not reach the next level by the end of Grade 8. The onset of adolescence, with all its attendant difficulties, frequently interferes with the steady growth in reading competence that a child may have shown in earlier years and that he may show again two or three years later. Other criteria besides reading ability should be taken into account when advising a student who is in Stage 1 as to whether or not he should apply to a special school or for a vocational program. It is necessary that the staff dealing with children in Grades 7 and 8 have full information on the variety of English courses available at all the high schools likely to receive the student the following year. Similarly, it is incumbent upon the high schools to inform their feeder schools of the language upgrading courses they offer. By sharing such information, and designing programs that are responsive to student needs at all levels, schools will be able to truly meet the reading and literacy needs of their students.

In the high schools, some basic streaming may occur as children move into various programs (vocational, general, advanced, enriched). However, it should be remembered that some of the students still in Stage 1 at this point in their development will improve their reading competence sufficiently to allow progress to more advanced academic studies at a later date. Therefore, not only should any streaming remain flexible, but also the reading component of the English program in all classes and schools must be designed to realize the full reading potential of every student.

Additional organizational strategies open to the schools at the Grade 9 and 10 levels include in-class grouping and individualized reading methods. Specialized instruction in extra time (in addition to the regular English program) or partial withdrawal programs provide another alternative. To meet the varied needs of its student body, each school should offer an adequate variety of accredited English courses, some with an extra strong reading component.

The importance of attending to the needs of Stage 1 students in Grades 7 and 8 has already been established. However, there will be some Stage 1 students in Grades 9 and 10 as well, and their special needs must also be met. Stage 1 students in Grade 9 may be students who have progressed through an ESL program but still have had little experience with written forms of English. They may be speakers of an English dialect, unfamiliar with the conventions, syntax, and vocabularies of various kinds of written materials. They may be children who have had little experience of books and reading. They may be children whose personal growth pattern is noticeably slower than usual. Whatever the individual causes, the presence of these children demands that the school ascertain what stages these students are in and offer, where needed, Stage 1 and Stage 2 courses that focus, using suitable methodology, on the objectives prescribed in this document for reading, writing, and oral work. Similarly, courses should be offered to meet the needs of students who cannot read well enough to profit from the use of textbooks and other written materials employed in other subject areas.

These courses must be designed at the local level so that the specific needs of the local student population may be effectively met. For example:

1. Some schools may have a significant number of students from other parts of the English-speaking world whose cultural and educational

background inhibits their progress in a "regular" English program. In such circumstances, courses should be offered whose aim is to enrich and expand reading competencies, as well as upgrade literacy and learning skills.

2. Where sufficient numbers of ESL students exist, bridging courses in reading and writing should be provided to prepare such students for courses that may make exacting linguistic demands upon them and that assume a certain degree of familiarity with Canadian culture (e.g., courses in literature and history).
3. In vocational schools, specific upgrading courses should be offered for students who show potential and who may eventually be transferred back into a collegiate program.
4. In schools where a high proportion of the students have weak reading and literacy skills, booster English programs should be offered which focus on strengthening and enriching both reading competencies and writing abilities.

At the end of all such booster or upgrading programs, the student's progress must be assessed, and a prediction made as to what subsequent program the student would be best advised to take. Provision must then be made for promotion into these English Studies programs. Thus, at the end of a booster program in Grade 9, for example, some students may be ready only for a Grade 10 booster program whose focus is still fixed somewhere in late Stage 1 or early Stage 2. Other students will be ready to move to a general Grade 10 English program, still others to an advanced Grade 9 program, and so on. Differences in achievement are to be expected, given the nature of adolescence and the individuality of the students. However, if the school and the curriculum are truly responsive to students' needs, every student will, in his own time, achieve the reading competence needed to profit from the continuing English program.

Evaluation and the Reading Program

Diagnostic evaluation of the student's reading competence is required to determine the student's independent or recreational reading level and his instructional level. This evaluation will in turn determine what reading programs should be offered by the school and the teacher, and what particular program is appropriate for the individual student. Techniques suggested include interviews with individual students, informal reading inventories, attitude and interest questionnaires, and checklists. In all cases, reference should be made to the stage profiles given in the first part of this section. Records of previous reading (not standardized tests) and *cloze* testing could also be used.

Ongoing or formative evaluation of students' reading competence is required to assess the value of strategies, texts, and other materials used, to build rapport with students, and to obtain the information required by parents. Short (5-10 minutes) individual interviews held in class during reading or writing time are probably the most effective means here. It should be possible to interview each student once every two weeks. The aim is to give students helpful feedback and to adjust the program. Checklists based on the objectives of the student's stage could be used. Miscue inventories will give more specific indication of strengths and weaknesses. Work can be planned and contracts made during these interviews.

The teacher should also help the student to keep adequate records (book reports, summaries of materials read, flow-charts, etc.). These records should be updated at each interview and should be available to supervisors and parents. An explanation of the reading program should also be made available to parents. Periodic reports to parents should include the following: an indication of the stage the student is in and of his level of achievement in that stage; some indication of what program might most profitably be undertaken next; and additional information and explanatory comments on the student's progress.

Summative evaluation of the reading program is required to assess the objectives and criteria of the reading program, to ascertain whether the various components of the English program are properly balanced, and to determine what modifications might be required.

Summative evaluation should be related to objectives and criteria derived from the goals and aims described in this document. Individual interviews, informal reading inventories, major assignments, records of progress, and student self-assessment could all be used.

In considering the use of standardized reading tests, evaluators should keep in mind the importance given in this program to such factors as individual interests, attitudes, and rate, independence in setting purposes, and the capacity for sustained effort that is needed to read longer works. These factors are especially important and must be adequately reflected in the instruments and procedures used in summative evaluation. It is questionable whether available standardized reading tests reflect the importance of these aspects of the reading program.

Development of Writing Abilities

> A child learns language primarily by using the four modes of talking, listening, writing and reading in close relationship with one another. Curiosity about language is widespread among children and enables them to engage successfully in occasional studies or linguistic 'experiments' arising out of their reading, writing, listening, and talking. The teacher encourages this curiosity and seizes the opportunity of pursuing some general question about language as it arises from usage, collecting and organising further examples for the purpose of answering the question. Studies of this kind may develop an experimental attitude towards language and provide a method of enquiry which helps pupils solve their own problems of language usage as they meet them.
>
> These *ad hoc* studies may in favourable circumstances, for example with older pupils, lead to *systematic* language studies. The value a pupil gains from these lies in the grasp of principles that may affect his understanding of himself and other people, rather than in any direct effect upon his language performance.
>
> Explicit rules and facts about language, that is to say the outcomes of other people's studies, have direct practical value to a pupil when (a) they solve particular problems in the tasks he is engaged on, or (b) he is able to reconstruct for himself the analysis that led to the rule.
>
> – Alan Bullock, *A Language for Life* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1975).

Introduction

Students follow individual routes in their pursuit of writing competence. This competence is developed principally through the purposeful use of writing, not through exercises divorced from context; that is, competence is developed through writing that originates in some personal purpose rather than through exercises based on technical concerns.

In the Intermediate Division, students continue to develop their natural language through social encounters and other experiences. This is, however, accompanied by the need to develop a more precise and logical language for the purpose of information-processing and communication. (The student is now frequently called upon to perform specific language tasks that involve writing for others on a variety of levels and for a variety of purposes – history reports, reports on science projects, examination answers, personal letters, etc.) The student is also called upon to explore evocative language in the study of literature. Some of these demands are imposed from without, some arise from within. The teacher's role in both cases is to recognize that the demands exist, and to extend the students' ability to respond in a variety of contexts and to a variety of audiences.

During the Intermediate years, students are not only gathering information but reorganizing their knowledge of, and attitudes towards, the world around them. They must begin to incorporate into their writings language patterns that help them to compare, summarize, classify, synthesize, interpret, assess, hypothesize, and to express their feelings and personal responses to the world. The development of these processes

will depend upon the students' understanding of the purposes for writing, and their ability to handle increased and more complex content.

At this stage a style begins to emerge that allows the student to express a point of view in a voice and mode which may be less personal and subjective. Progress is marked by the increase in the variety of purposes and audiences for which the student is able to write.

Growing Maturity and the Need for Skills

As they mature, students should be writing with considerable fluency and ease; continuing refinement should be evident in their work. Writing that is sincere and that is meaningful to the reader as well as to the writer involves several distinct stages: an *incubation* period; a *selection* process; the crystallization of *focus*; the *organization* process; and the actual *writing*.

The editing stage follows. Editing should be a reformulation process – an opportunity for further thought and clarification – not merely the ritual of recopying and correcting mechanical errors. It is the tool of a fairly sophisticated writer who is writing for an audience beyond the self. An understanding and appreciation of paragraphing, variety in sentence structure, syntax, spelling, punctuation, word order, and usage leads to the improvement of individual style. Students will need guidance on specific aspects of usage and grammar as problems arise in their writing. The development of a positive attitude by students to their own writing greatly affects the writing process.

Organizing the Student Writing Program

During the Intermediate years, the student's growing maturity is characterized by significant advances in linguistic and psychological development. Occasional plateaux signal opportunities for consolidation and reinforcement of skills and assessment of the student writing program. Needs for new language learning or further skill development may be identified and organized. It is the school's responsibility to map out a writing program that reflects the language and thought of the adolescent, keeping in mind the developmental needs of individual students. (Some students will move through the different stages of the writing process easily and quickly; others may require more time and increased opportunities for writing in order to move through all the stages.)

The writing program should take several directions. In the beginning, insights into the writing process are gained by direct involvement in the writing process itself: the student *learns to write by writing*. Next, he *learns about* writing *by studying writing* – his own writing, the works of published writers, and eventually what others have said about writing in books on language.

Learning to Write by Writing

1. Student writing probably flourishes best in a classroom atmosphere in which students are continuously motivated.
2. Students should be encouraged to have respect for their own language resources and writing potential.
3. The school's respect for the student's time and energy should be reflected in the nature of the writing assignments. Topics for student writing should arise from day-to-day concerns, interests, and activities,

as well as from subject content under study. While topics should not be too broad in scope, they should have sufficient potential to motivate the student to probe and question.

4. The student should view his writing as a purposeful part of his educational experience, regarding the ongoing development of writing skills as a means of developing overall language confidence.
5. The student needs opportunities to write quantitatively as well as qualitatively – to write regularly and frequently. A student writing folder should be kept on file so that the development of writing ability can be monitored.
6. The student should experience success and progress in the development of his writing skills.
7. Pre-writing activities (preparation, motivation) and post-writing activities (contrast, evaluation, comment) are essential phases of any writing assignment. Class time must be provided for both.
8. Since reading and talking stimulate writing, some such language activity should precede writing. For some students, talking with peers is the best stimulus. These students like to write in an informal setting: they like to do their writing where they do their talking, sitting round a table they can lean on, talk across, and write on. Other students need a quiet area where they can gather their thoughts and concentrate. The teacher should observe each student's writing habits to determine the conditions under which he works best, and ensure that these conditions are afforded him whenever possible.
9. Many students need and appreciate assistance in choosing the voice, mode, and point of view most suited to their particular audience.
10. Praise and approval contribute significantly to student growth and development in writing. Recognition of specific strengths should be part of a general climate of encouragement.
11. A most effective way for a student to remedy specific weaknesses is to work with the English teacher on an individual basis. One or two tutorial periods should be scheduled every cycle, so that the teacher may have some time to work individually with each student.

Purposes for Writing

Young people use oral language proficiently in a number of ways, for a variety of purposes. They use language to express emotion – their joys, fears, and hopes; to reveal themselves to others and test their self-image; and to establish relationships with those around them. They formulate questions about the world around them, they play, they fantasize, using language imaginatively to sort out order and reality. Other uses of language – to inform, hypothesize, or debate, for instance – are learned relatively late in a student's development. Crucial to the students' understanding of language at this stage is their concept of its purpose or function.

A clear rationale or purpose for writing should be established *with* or *by the student:* he should always be involved in setting the short-term purposes and should always understand the long-term goals. "The main activity in the area of 'personal' writing should arise from a context created out of the corporate enterprises of the classroom and the experiences of the pupils."[1]

1. Bullock, *A Language for Life.*

Language Forms That Provide Purposes for Writing

To reveal something of the self:

- private diaries
- records of "talk" on paper
- public journals
- stories based on dreams, memories, wishes
- poetry
- records of interior monologues or stream-of-consciousness thinking

To express feelings, to delight, or to please:

- private diaries
- poetry
- record of "talk" on paper
- private letters
- public journals
- stories based on wishes, lies, dreams
- editorials
- letters to the editor
- records of interior monologues or stream-of-consciousness thinking

To narrate, to entertain, or to amuse:

- anecdotes
- stories based on fantasy or myth
- tall tales
- records of dreams, wishes, memories
- jokes
- dialogue
- scripts
- human interest stories
- ballads, songs
- traditional stories
- legends, poetry
- stories with surprise endings or involving flashback technique

To explain:

- expository prose
- recipes
- manuals of instruction
- explanations of behaviour, needs, or requirements
- explanations of procedures and processes

To question:

- questioning procedures and processes
- reports
- socratic dialogue
- interviews, dialogue
- riddles

To describe:

- personal journals
- profiles
- essays
- cinquains
- jottings of sensory impressions
- haikus
- descriptive paragraphs (objects, places, people)
- reports (newspaper, scientific, etc.)

To argue:

debates	scripts	dialogue
speeches	examination answers	expository prose
essays		

To persuade:

editorials	dialogue	letters to the editor
commercials	advertisements	
personal essays	film scripts	captions for slides

To inform:

news reports	research reports	examination answers
minutes of a meeting	film and videotape scripts	notes
business letters		

Instructional Strategies

Writing activities in the English program should be *purposeful* for the student; that is, they should occur in a context in which they have continuity with some larger enterprise such as a school newspaper or a larger study. Students need the opportunity to write for a range of purposes and audiences (self, teacher, peers, unknown audiences). The larger enterprise should be one that allows integration of all the language skills.

1. *Logs, Diaries, and Journals*

The log, the private diary, and the more public journal are appropriate vehicles for getting students started.

Student writing problems: Regardless of age or grade, every student stands to benefit from the exercise of putting pen to paper *regularly.* Writing is an arduous task for students who have not had much opportunity to express their thoughts in a disciplined manner. Because they do not know how to say what they are thinking, they frequently come to believe that they have nothing to say. Frustrated, they fuss and fidget. When they finally get under way, they may make several false starts. They have difficulty in writing to a satisfactory conclusion. It is unfair to ask students to write just once or twice a week; they should be allowed some time *every day* to express their thoughts and feelings. Journal writing offers opportunities for working in the modes students are accustomed to hearing and using in their daily lives: argument, exposition, narrative, and description.

The value of daily practice: The diary or journal provides students in the early stages of writing development with the opportunity to write quantitatively as well as qualitatively, and thus to see themselves as authors. It allows them to experiment with language, content, style, and form. For the more advanced student, journal writing gives continuity to the writing program, an ingredient essential for skill-building.

Students in the early stages of writing development may start by merely writing a list or sentence fragments, but, as this kind of writing becomes easy for them, they soon move forward and attempt a sentence, then a paragraph, or perhaps even a poem. At the beginning, they feel free to tell what they see and hear, how they think and feel; in later stages, they will feel free to interpret others' ideas in the light of their own experience. They will write more expansively about their point of view, at the same time becoming more objective as they learn how to accept or reject the ideas of others.

Eventually, students discover that they do indeed have something to say. Their minds become active and agile. As they gain confidence and experience, they will write more quickly, easily, and smoothly.

Organization: It is recommended that a regular time be set for journal writing at the beginning of the year, and that a routine be established. Keeping periods brief will help to sustain interest, as it makes students keen to write more. It also keeps careless errors to a minimum, helps to eliminate the repetition of ideas, and encourages the student to organize his thinking.

Log: Students could discuss the function of logs: Who keeps logs? For what purposes (long ago, today)?

A calendar-like record of the events of a day or week might be kept in a special notebook reserved for the purpose.

Private diary: This in-class record might include personal observations, random jottings, and *a daily record of thoughts and feelings.* Ideas recorded here may be useful for other kinds of writing, undertaken at other times. This writing is shared only if the student agrees.

Public journal: The journal, *a less private form of diary,* is more readily shared, allows more flexibility, and is more adaptable as a teaching tool. Through exchange and response, new ideas develop. In the early stages, students enjoy writing about themselves, their belongings, the people they know, and the simple, everyday things that are so often overlooked. With guidance, they can be helped to see how the little things in life make life more interesting. At this stage, topics might include the following:

- How I Feel When I Wake Up
- What Is Red?
- How I Behave When I'm Angry.

In the later stages students may expand on ideas encountered in their study of literature, current events, and other subjects, their holiday experiences, and so forth.

Observations recorded briefly in journals can be used for formal writing assignments: each student selects an entry he would like to expand upon; he elaborates on the ideas, reorganizing and consolidating, adding and deleting. A synthesis of several related entries could constitute another assignment.

Other diary activities: To motivate students from time to time, the teacher might have them read and discuss famous diaries, their authors, and their significance in the annals of history (e.g., the diaries of Samuel Pepys, Lady Simcoe, Anne Frank). Students can:

a) examine the nature of the topics discussed;

b) read significant passages and discuss the particular style and language used;

c) discuss how diarists reveal themselves – their strengths and weaknesses;

d) discuss the differences between:
   i) personal and private writing;
   ii) personal and public writing.

2. *The Newspaper*

Many of the requirements of a good writing program may be fulfilled, at this level, by a student newspaper. School newspapers are especially good, but even a class paper or magazine will allow a purposeful exchange of ideas, point up the need for editing, and provide opportunities to experiment with a wide variety of writing styles.

Motivational activities for students

a) Study the format of the newspaper, noting such features as:

- the front page
- the sports section
- the editorial page
- the city page
- feature articles
- photographs, cartoons, maps
- advertising

b) Discuss the following questions:
- Who gets the paper first in your home?
- What section do you turn to first? Why?
- What section does your father read first? Your mother?
- Where are the most important news stories found?
- What important information do you personally seek in the local paper?

c) Turn to the sports section. What is its purpose? Note the large number of photographs; how do you account for this? Compare the coverage of a sports event in two different papers. What differences do you note? How do you account for the differences?

d) The sports pages of newspapers exemplify a sub-language. Examine the language of the sports pages. List all the verbs that are used there as synonyms for the verb *to defeat*. How do you account for the large variety of verbs used? In what ways does the language used on the sports page differ from the language on the front page or editorial page?

e) Write a news story about a real or imaginary sports event. Once again, verbs will play a prominent role in the language you use; so will adverbs. Why?

f) Discuss the elements of a front-page news story, using the question words *what, when, who, where, why,* and *how.*

Find a current news story in your local paper. Answer the questions listed above. Choose a story from your reader, or an excerpt from a novel to rewrite as a news story.

g) Write original news stories about real events occurring in your school or community.

h) Study the photographs in newspapers. Write fresh captions for these pictures.

i) Study the news stories on the front page. What is the function of the headline, lead, by-line, date line, cut line?

j) Study the weather report. Where is it found? Discuss language patterns characteristic of such reports. Using the language of the weatherman, write a weather report describing weather conditions that would close all the schools in your area for a day. Write a weather forecast predicting the kind of weather you hope to enjoy next weekend.

3. *The Editorial*

Students moving through the more advanced stages of writing development will be interested in the format and function of the editorial page.

Suggested activities for students

a) Compare an editorial with a news story on the same subject. Is the news explained in the editorial? Is the editor's opinion expressed? How? In what order did he state his argument? What is the mood expressed? What devices are used to set the mood or tone? Are they effective? Why?

b) Collect various kinds of editorial comment, such as editorials, cartoons, and letters to the editor. Make a bulletin board display.

c) Classify the editorials according to their various purposes: to inform, to educate, to argue, to entertain.

d) Write an editorial based on an actual news event.

e) Write an editorial for your school paper on an imaginary issue or event.

f) Write a letter to the editor either agreeing or disagreeing with the editorial policy expressed by the newspaper.

g) Plan and sketch some editorial cartoons based on (a) leading events in the community, (b) events occurring in school.

h) Interview an editorial writer about his work and the policy of his newspaper. Plan your questions carefully. What research might you need to undertake as you organize your questions?

i) After reading two or three plays, write reviews for your local newspaper that will either encourage or discourage their production by the local theatre company.

4. *Advertising*

Suggested activities for students

a) Prepare advertising copy that will boost the sale of a good book you have recently read. What information will you include? What language will you use to persuade readers to buy the book?

b) You have a motorcycle for sale. Plan an advertisement to be placed in the local paper. What kind of description will sell the cycle for you? A truthful one? An embellished one? Discuss how we use language to manipulate the behaviour of others. How can we make advertisements honest?

5. *Letter-Writing*

Suggested activities for students

a) Write a letter to a close friend in which you recount the argument presented in a controversial editorial in the newspaper.

b) Because your friend needs the information tomorrow, there is no time to send the letter. Send a telegram instead. You are limited to thirty words; include as much of the original information as possible.

c) Write a letter to a friend persuading him to return the textbook he borrowed before moving away. The friend does not reply. After a few weeks you write another letter. In what ways will the second letter be different from the first? Finally the book is returned (or not returned) with an accompanying letter. Write the letter you receive from your friend.

6. *Using the Student's Own Reading*

A good talk session before writing can provide the student with motivation for writing, a good writing atmosphere, and a variety of vocabulary and language patterns from which to choose. Students realize that they can borrow from the "word bank" that was built up as the writing activity was planned. (The words are recorded either on the blackboard or on chart paper.)

Suggested activities for students

a) You are a guide conducting a tour of the locale of the book you are reading. Write down your commentary.

b) You are either the villain or hero of the story, novel, or play you are reading. Write one or two paragraphs in support of your behaviour in the action.

c) Write a mock defence for the villain of a story who is on trial for his behaviour.

d) You are an attorney, and you are prosecuting a character for the criminal behaviour exhibited in a book or play you have just read. Write a summation speech in which you attempt to convince the jury that the character is guilty of the crime committed.

7. *Drama and Dialogue*

Drama should form an integral part of the writing program. As involvement and sharing are a natural part of drama, work done in small groups will provide the maximum motivation and opportunity. The oral aspect of drama should be fully exploited. By writing dialogues and acting them out, students will come to recognize the particular function of dialogue and be motivated to use the form in their other writings as well.

Suggested activities for students

a) "Would you like some more?"
"Oh yes, please. I'm too tired to move."
"That's good! They're loading me up."
Where could the above exchange have been overheard? Who do you think are the speakers? Where are they? Describe the situation. What is missing from the dialogue that makes it hard for you to follow? Account for the omissions.

b) Get into the habit of listening to snatches of conversation you might overhear in crowds, on the bus, in school corridors, in the lunchroom. Such an activity can be amusing as well as informative. Write out these dialogue fragments for the purpose of acting them out.

c) Write dialogue for the following pairs of individuals (students might role-play as they say the lines):

i) a bus driver and a passenger climbing aboard
ii) a parent and a teenager who didn't get home on time
iii) a robin and a worm

iv) a father and a son or daughter who has damaged the family car
v) two icicles – one long, one short
vi) a garage attendant and a car owner at the fuel pumps
vii) a policeman and a motorist who has failed to observe a signal to stop.

d) Write an eyewitness, first-person account of one of the following (in each case it will be necessary to identify the speaker and the audience):
i) a traffic tie-up at rush hour
ii) the winning goal of a hockey game
iii) a big fire
iv) an accident.
Vary your audience; the account of the fire, for instance, could be addressed to the fire department or to a friend.

e) You receive a poor mark on a science test for which you have studied hard. Write out your reaction as you:
i) complain to your best friend;
ii) complain to your teacher;
iii) give an account to your parents.

f) Write out the questions you would ask the writer of a book you are reading if he visited your classroom today.

8. *Poetry*

Poetry is another integral part of the creative writing program. As with journal writing, the student's first efforts will focus on feelings, places, and actions. A later important aspect of poetry writing is the development and use of figurative language. Students find free verse a good starting point. They should understand that the primary emphasis is always on mood and sensory impressions and that the conventions of rhyme, metre, and rhythm are secondary considerations.

Suggested activities for students

A cinquain is a useful form in which to explore word discrimination, unity of thought, and imagery. It is a five-line poem in which each line has a special purpose:

First line – one word naming the subject of the poem
Second line – two words telling us something about the subject
Third line – three words describing an action
Fourth line – four words describing a feeling
Fifth line – one word (a) supplying another word for the title, or (b) summing up the mood or feeling expressed in the poem.

Example: Student
Works hard
Scarcely ever complains
Enjoys going to school
Keen!

9. *Using Pictures, Slides, Films, Filmstrips, Television, Music*

Suggested strategies for teachers

a) Have the students write captions for a series of slides.

b) Use a film that tells a story. Stop the film before the conclusion to give students the opportunity to write their own endings. Have them compare their conclusions with the one offered by the film.

c) Show part of the film without the sound. Have the students write the dialogue or narration.

d) Have the students listen to part of the sound track without the image. Have them describe the picture that corresponds to the dialogue or commentary.

e) Stop the film at a particular frame; have the students write a detailed description of the events or mood suggested. Ask them to describe in writing their emotional reaction to the situation depicted.

f) Ask students to choose three or four slides from a collection for the purpose of constructing a story line.

g) Have the students discuss their favourite television programs. They could list reasons why they like a certain program, and why parents might not agree.

h) Play recordings of theme music from one or two films. Discuss the role of background music. Play a recording of music that has a strong emotional theme (e.g., Rachmaninov or Ravel). Have students imagine that they are in the cinema; ask them to describe the scene they are watching.

10. *Paragraph-Writing*

Student writing can grow out of several valid starting points. Journal writing, for example, may be a prelude to the formal study and writing of extended passages. At the beginning of the year, students tend to write of their own experiences in detail. This writing is largely free and unstructured, although it may occasionally focus on a specific subject. From time to time, students present samples of their writing for evaluation – from a writing standpoint only – by the class or a smaller group. This is the beginning of a conscious striving for an acceptable personal writing style.

Suggested strategies for teachers

a) Divide the class into groups. Have each group select paragraphs that they think effective – from students' work, novels, and short stories. Discuss the key impressions conveyed by the writers. Were there any particularly important sentences in the paragraphs? If so, how did they affect the organization of the paragraphs? Where did each one occur in the paragraph?

b) Present students with a series of pictures. Have students write topic sentences for each.

c) Present students with a set of objects, photographs, paintings, or other items that can be described. Have each student first decide what impression he would like to create in his description, and then list the details he would use to convey the impression.

d) To teach the concept of order in a paragraph, present the students with a number of paragraphs in which the sentence order has been jumbled. (The sentences could be written on strips of chart paper or filing cards.) Divide the students into groups, and ask each group to rearrange the sentences into the order that seems most logical to them. Discuss why a particular sentence has been placed where it appears. Identify the topic sentence; determine the effect of its position upon the paragraph as a whole.

e) i) Have the students write a paragraph in which the topic sentence is used at the beginning of the paragraph to present a point of view.

ii) Have students write a paragraph in which the topic sentence is used in the middle of the paragraph to enlarge upon the point of view presented.

iii) Have students write a paragraph in which the topic sentence is used to lead the reader to a certain conclusion.

Evaluation of Student Writing

In order to be motivated to write, students must feel that their writing is purposeful and that their ideas are acceptable. Moreover, they must be allowed to experiment and take risks in the process of developing writing competence. Positive remarks made about their writing are often interpreted by students as approval not only of their language but of themselves. Evaluation that involves the student increases the student's willingness to explore and attempt different styles and forms.

Writing Clinic

Volunteers write samples of their work on transparencies. These are discussed in class with the teacher, who points out strengths and helps students identify weaknesses. This should be done in a tactful, constructive manner. Students should be eager to submit their work for such clinics.

Peer Evaluation Using Questionnaires

Students might complete a teacher-made questionnaire on the work of their fellow students. They might enjoy designing questionnaires to be used in evaluating other specific writing tasks.

Teacher-made Questionnaire for Peer Evaluation

Evaluator's name: _____ Writer's name: _____

1. Identify the topic sentence: _____

_____

2. What details has the writer used to support this topic? _____

_____

3. Are they effective? _____

_____

4. Can you suggest areas that the writer may have ignored? _____

_____

5. Write a brief note to the writer outlining the good points and bad points of his work. _____

_____

_____

Program Evaluation

Teachers may find the following questions useful in evaluating their classroom climate and programs.

- Are students made to feel that they are capable of expressing ideas of worth?

- Do both students and teacher value writing as a necessary and vital form of communication?

- Is there an atmosphere of trust, encouraging frequent, frank, honest, and immediate evaluation of work?

- Are students developing intrinsic motivation, evident in the desire to rewrite, to polish, to search for a better word, or are they still primarily interested in getting good marks or grades?

- Is the hush that descends on a group following a reading of a moving piece of work by a student recognized as an evaluation in itself?

- Are small progressions in attitude (e.g., from "I hate writing" to "I don't know what to write" to "I'm stuck") recognized as growth in motivation?

- Are parents encouraged to read student writing and react to it?

- Does the teacher make an attempt to de-emphasize the importance of marks by keeping a record of marks in a record file rather than recording them on students' papers?

- Does evaluation of writing take place in a meaningful context?

- Are students encouraged to be imaginative? Are opportunities seized to stimulate their imaginations?

- Does the teacher respond to student writing with the same range of emotion shown other writers – enthusiasm, excitement, contemplation, and, occasionally, humility, wistfulness, anger?

- Is revision seen as an opportunity to *review* work or is it just an opportunity to *recopy?*

Practical, Informative Writing

Although some students may need more help than others, all youngsters require some guidance as they strive to develop the skills involved in locating specific pieces of information and organizing such information for a specific purpose. In assigning reports, the teacher should be expecting more than a mere compilation of facts, even from seventh graders. The implied objective of any reportorial writing is a statement of outcomes, a conclusion, an interpretation or judgement of some kind.

For students, facility in the use of certain kinds of formal language employed in school – that is, language that informs, explains, defends, questions, synthesizes, hypothesizes, and assesses – is the result of a slow, cumulative process, linked to adolescent development and linguistic maturity. From the student's point of view, mastery of the informative forms of language requires time – time to grow and think; from the teachers' point of view, it requires patience and understanding.

In the early stages of writing development, the students' ability to use their own language to communicate will be shaped by the opportunities they get in class to (1) talk, share, and write out their personal observations in purposeful contexts for predetermined audiences; (2) select and plan units of study, working together in groups. Keeping some form of personal journal or log helps students extend their language power from

the informal, subjective level of personal writing to the more formal, impersonal, and objective level usually associated with essays and reports.

At this stage students should be engaged in information-seeking activities that focus on first-hand experience, observation, and interaction with other people. Student findings and interpretations should be confirmed through conversation with others, or verified through other resources, such as print and film. (A number of such resources should always be readily available to the student.)

As students become increasingly absorbed in the world around them, they require language patterns that match the growing complexity of their thoughts and ideas. Students will begin to draw information from a wide variety of sources. Useful in preparing notes, reports, and examination answers are brochures, pamphlets, newspapers, magazines, films and filmstrips, charts, maps and tables, as well as trade books and textbooks. However, only when students reach the later stages of informative writing will they become proficient in synthesizing facts and opinions in longer essays and major projects.

It is the responsibility of each elementary and secondary school to harness student time, energy, and language resources wisely and efficiently. Principals and teachers responsible for developing programs are responsible for ensuring: (1) that course content is consistent with skill development; (2) that resource materials are readily available; (3) that adequate in-school time is allotted to writing assignments. Teachers in all areas of the curriculum should work together with English teachers in developing the skills required for effective note-taking in specific areas of the curriculum (e.g., history, geography, science). In English classes much purposeful writing can be generated by the discussion of topical issues of immediate concern to adolescents, i.e., junk foods, cigarette smoking, conservation of energy. Individual consideration should be given to ESL students to ensure that assignments meet their needs and abilities.

> Pupils should be asked to write on subjects of which they have some knowledge and on which they have the right to an opinion of their own. The teacher can find thought-provoking subjects for written work through discussions with the pupils or lead the pupils to find such subjects for themselves through planned activities. Pupils should be led to decide for themselves in advance the people for whom they are writing. The audience may be the writers themselves, the teachers, the class or the school, parents, friends, or the community. But the audience should be a real one within the capacity as well as the right of the pupil to address. Asking pupils to write without definitive readers in mind, as if they were addressing a vacuum or the civilized world, encourages pretence and platitudes.
>
> Pupils should be led to define clearly for themselves their purpose in writing. The purpose may be to tell a good story, to describe, to explain a simple process, to report an event, or to support an opinion, in order that the reader may be entertained, informed, or convinced. Most pupils will be challenged to their best efforts if their writing is closely related to practical affairs and motivated by real situations, such as producing a school paper, obtaining a position, contributing to a project or a meeting. This is of real importance, for many teachers of English have at the back of their minds the text-book and the examination rather than the activities of practical life.
>
> – *Outlines of Courses for Experimental Use, Intermediate Division, Curriculum I:1, 1951.*

Group Planning for Skill Development and Assessment

The selection of topics offering appropriate practice in note-taking and practical writing is best achieved through group planning in which questions and problems related to the unit of work under discussion are identified by the students. Each individual student's report should make a meaningful and purposeful contribution to the overall development of the group project. Because each student is actively involved in the process, writing developed through this approach is more student-directed and student-assessed. The teacher's task is to guide the students to decisions regarding the mode, voice, or format most appropriate to their purpose. Since individuals have different learning styles, there is no one "safe way" or model for teaching note-taking and study skills. It is always helpful, however, to allow students to talk together, to "retalk", to read and reread, to write and rewrite.

The final report may take the form of (1) a formal, written report; (2) fragmented jottings forming the basis of a spoken commentary; (3) a presentation that may or may not utilize a variety of media. The project may culminate in presentations involving the group as a whole. Some examples follow.

1. *Visual presentations:* slides and/or films, dioramas, murals, etc.
2. *Oral presentations:* tape recordings, panel discussions, debates, puppet shows, poetry readings
3. *Written presentations:* factual reports, plays, poems.

Within such a framework the teacher may (1) assess students individually, keeping in mind the process as well as the product; (2) subsequently provide direct instruction and practice, on a small-group or individual basis, in such areas as study skills, note-taking, and library skills.

Through group planning students may also discover other topics of interest or concern that they may wish to pursue through independent study.

Topics for Group Reporting

Examples of topics of interest to adolescents:

- *Junk Food: Do I Want to Eat That?*
- *Conservation of Energy: Turn Down the Heat and Put on Sweaters!*
- *Cigarette Smoking: Put Out That Cigarette and Listen to This!*

In small-group discussion, allow students time to plan and evolve a *modus operandi*. Facilitate the discussion by posing questions when necessary.

- What questions do you need to raise?
- What problems or issues do you need to identify?
- What are your most likely sources of information?
- Who is saying that? To whom? For what reasons?
- What mode will you use?
- How will you organize your report for greatest impact? How will you deal with facts? Implications? Recommendations?

- Is your report to be read, or is it to be written in note form for oral delivery?
- What will be the nature of your final presentation? Will it include a booklet? Visual aids? A panel discussion? Plays and poetry? A debate? Murals? Tape recordings?

Instructional Strategies for Group Work or Independent Study

1. Write instructions or manuals for other students on ways of:
   a) waxing your skis in very cold weather; on milder days;
   b) replacing a worn-out record needle;
   c) starting the car in sub-zero weather without running down the battery;
   d) restringing a guitar or ukulele;
   e) changing the electric plug on the vacuum cleaner;
   f) bleaching jeans in the washer;
   g) washing the kitchen floor;
   h) making French toast;
   i) applying eye make-up effectively;
   j) sewing a badge on the back of a T-shirt or swim suit;
   k) docking a boat;
   l) taking a shower without getting scalded;
   m) placing a worm on a hook;
   n) replacing a fuse in the oven;
   o) making pizza;
   p) kayaking.
2. Prepare a survey to find out:
   a) the favourite breakfast foods of teenagers;
   b) the most common and uncommon names among students of your generation;
   c) how teenagers spend their time between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.; between 8:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.; after 10:00 p.m.;
   d) the favourite reading material of teenagers.

   Consider the following:
   - What questions will you need to plan?
   - How will you organize your data sheets?
   - How will you conduct the survey? Whom will you include in your survey?
   - What information do the data give you?
   - What conclusions do you draw? How will you use this information?
3. Write a commentary on:
   a) your record or tape collection
   b) last night's hockey or football game
   c) a current event of recent interest
   d) the experience of eating spaghetti
   e) a friend's hair style.

4. Write a report giving information on the materials, labour, and cost involved in the following projects:

   a) making a macramé flowerpot holder

   b) building a swimming pool in the backyard

   c) making new curtains for your bedroom

   d) panelling the recreation room

   e) taking a weekend camping trip

   f) sewing a wardrobe for going south on holiday.

   What problems will need consideration?
   What sources of information will you consult? How will others be able to determine the accuracy of your information and the statements made by you in your report?

5. Write a report on any one of the following:

spindle	*hydromaniac*	*hoyden*	*manticore*
Sheol	*roborant*	*guy*	*saraband*

   What will you do first? Why not try a guessing game before you begin? (Subsequent research may prove you right.)

6. Report on the word origins of the expressions that follow. Add other expressions to the list.

yoyo	*king's cushion*
dead man's handle	*rough-house*
the Dinkums	*sourdough*
Empire waist	*Eton crop*

7. a) Find a picture of a hair style that you would like; study it. Without showing your barber or hairdresser the picture, explain to him how you want your hair cut and styled.

   b) Write the instructions for cutting and setting the hair style, as an editor would for a fashion magazine.

   c) Compare your presentations in (a) and (b): What characteristics distinguish the spoken mode from the written mode?

8. Prepare a scrapbook on famous adolescents from history: King Tutankhamen, Alexander the Great, Jeanne d'Arc, David Thompson, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, etc.

9. Demonstrate to the group how you would make something – a Hallowe'en table centre, a festival decoration, a child's toy, a model car, macramé flower holders, etc. Identify each step in the process. Write out the procedures as a hand-out for the group. As you demonstrate, tape your oral presentation for analysis and assessment later. Which was clearer – your written instructions or your verbal explanation? How did you depart from your written text? Why?

10. For more senior classes:

    As a class or small group, prepare a booklet giving younger students advice on:

    a) how to make good notes in class;

b) how to write an assignment paper. Give hints on the following aspects: things to consider in selecting questions to be answered and in locating sources of information; effective note-making; précis; paraphrase and quotations; the writing process; logical sequence, organization; credits, footnotes, and bibliography.

Organizing Student Writing

- Student-made booklets offer students scope to organize their ideas personally and creatively, on a level commensurate with their ability. Booklets could take the form of logs, journals, scrapbooks, catalogues.

- Index cards are useful for keeping records and organizing data.

- Class newspapers, magazines, and scrapbooks are useful for group projects focusing on scientific, historical, or current events material.

- The use of pictures, diagrams, charts, graphs, maps, and tables should be encouraged as another means of communicating significant information.

- Dioramas, murals, plays and poetry, panel discussions, and debates may emerge from written reports.

- If the format allows, the written reports of individual students should be filed in the students' writing folders.

To think rightly, is of knowledge; to speak fluently, is of nature;
To read with profit, is of care; but to write aptly, is of practice.
No talent among men hath more scholars and fewer masters:
For to write is to speak beyond hearing, and none stand by to explain.
To be accurate, write; to remember, write; to know thine own mind, write:
And a written prayer is a prayer of faith; special, sure, and to be answered.
Hast thou a thought upon thy brain, catch it while thou canst;
Or other thoughts shall settle there, and this shall soon take wing:
Thine uncompounded unity of soul, which argueth and maketh it immortal,
Yieldeth up its momentary self to every single thought;
Therefore, to husband thine ideas, and give them stability and substance,
Write often for thy secret eye: so shalt thou grow wiser.
The commonest mind is full of thoughts; some worthy of the rarest;
And could it see them fairly writ, would wonder at its wealth.

– Martin Farquhar Tupper, *Proverbial Philosophy: A Book of Thoughts and Arguments* (New York: Wiley & Putnam, 1847).

Grammar and Usage

Expressive language (essentially the speech of the home) is the appropriate form, it seems to me, for the development of activities *within a culture group.* In *poetic* language a culture group embodies and refines its essential values, expresses its uniqueness, and in so doing makes that embodiment available for interchange *within a network of culture groups. Transactional* language, spoken or written, is the embodiment (at one level) of what is *common across culture groups within a society* – the language of government, of commerce and the professions, of information exchange in all forms from the most practical to the most theoretical. It is here, then, in the use of transactional language, that demands for widely acceptable standards of some kind ('Standard English', for example) are most obviously justified.

– J.N. Britton in *A Language for Life* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1975).

No special equipment is needed. The data is plentiful and easily available. Young children have a deep interest in language. Sometimes this curiosity has been suppressed before adolescence, but it is easily re-established in high school if language can be presented as something to explore without prescriptive injunctions casting their shadows....

A skillful teacher can guide a class, of whatever ability, into areas where they will find the right balance of success and challenge. There is ample opportunity for a change of pace as needed. Many of the problems can arise naturally out of other work – for example, composition and literature – and others will come to the students' attention as they observe language use among their fellows. Relevance is, therefore, evident.

– H.A. Gleason, *Linguistics and English Grammar* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965).

A Definition of Terms

English *grammar* is a number of systems of rules or, rather, observed regularities of the language. These include, among other things, syntax, or regularities of word order, and inflexion, or regularities in the use of variant endings of words.

Usage refers to customary practice in language use, including the manner of adapting language to a particular purpose and situation. In order to communicate effectively, it is necessary not merely to speak or write grammatically, but also to use the variety of language appropriate to the subject, the audience, the medium, and the purpose of the speech or written passage.

A *descriptive grammar* is a model of the structure of the language; it is an attempt to describe grammar. Several linguistically respectable descriptive grammars have been produced as alternative modes of explaining the same set of data, but each tends to oversimplify, in some way or other, by emphasizing one facet at the expense of others. A study of grammar, drawing on the strengths of several of these grammars and undertaken at some appropriate point in the students' development, will prove a useful complement to the more practical activities of the English program.

Stages in the Linguistic Development of Students

It would appear that there are three major stages in a student's language development: *linguistic competence*, *communicative competence*, and *analytic competence*.

Linguistic competence is the command of English grammar that is instinctive to every English-speaking person. This command, or knowledge, does not enable one to make statements about grammar; it makes one able to make statements in English. This competence, or capacity for generating rule-governed language, is usually sufficiently developed in Intermediate Division students whose dominant language is English to provide an adequate foundation for instruction in usage as well as for learning through reading, writing, speaking, listening, and literature. For English-as-a-second-language students, considerable work may remain to be done in developing linguistic competence, and reference should be made to the Ministry's English-as-a-second-language guideline in planning programs for such students.

Communicative competence is knowledge of usage. When the student starts to use language in a social situation with which he or she is not familiar, the language used will tend to be that which the student's past experience tells him is natural. In time the student should learn that there are various ways of expressing something in speech or in writing and that his meaning is significantly altered by the choices he makes between these ways. Ultimately, the student should become competent in making appropriate choices. The development of communicative competence should be the teacher's main concern in the Intermediate Division.

There are some students, however, who reach the stage of *analytic competence* during early adolescence; that is to say, they become capable of paying sustained attention to language about language, or descriptive grammar, as opposed to language about experience. This is probably preceded by the ability to study descriptive grammar on an occasional basis for short periods of time. The *ad hoc* study can begin as an outgrowth of instruction in usage, so that a reasonably extensive grasp of terminology and concepts may be achieved, and desirable attitudes and interests fostered, before systematic study begins. Perhaps more than half of the students in the Intermediate Division could profitably engage in systematic study of descriptive grammar before they move to the Senior Division, but it should be remembered that this is no substitute for the basics of usage practised, extended, and refined in the reading, writing, literature, speaking, and listening components of the program.

Usage

Aims

Learning experiences in the English program should enable students to:

1. *become aware of the varieties of English;*
   - recognize the uniqueness of each individual's language;
   - distinguish between regional, social, and historical dialects;
   - compare and contrast varieties according to subject matter, medium, and attitude to audience and content.

2. *choose wisely among the varieties of English so as to communicate with maximum effectiveness in any given situation;*

   - select a degree of formality or informality that is in keeping with one's attitude to the audience (confident ease in writing for oneself, concerned intimacy for a friend, polished dignity for a critic, etc.) and appropriate to one's purpose (to clarify for oneself, to entertain a friend, to satisfy a critic, to outline a problem for a small group of experts, to hold the attention of the electorate, etc.);

   - select the variety of register most commonly used in dealing with the subject matter at hand (chess, cooking, poetry, mathematics, model-building, football, music, law, etc.), provided that the register is also appropriate to one's attitude to audience and content;

   - select a variety appropriate to the medium or mode used (speech, live or recorded; written communication to be accompanied by graphic illustrations, written as stream of consciousness, written as if spoken, etc.).

3. *use the variety chosen in such a way as to establish and meet appropriate expectations in the reader or listener;*

   - use diction that is in keeping with the variety used with regard to such features as degree of abstraction, clarity of reference, the sense in which the word is used in the particular field concerned;

   - use clause patterns that express the elements of meaning (i.e., that identify the agent, the affected, the recipient, the attribute, time, outcome, location, etc.) in ways that generally conform to the conventions of the variety chosen (for example, the use of the passive in scientific reports, the use of the imperative in mathematics and cooking instructions, etc.);

   - use the format commonly used with the variety chosen, except when deliberately creating a special effect.

Activities

The students' use of language will have been influenced by their experiences and perceptions. This often-intuitive knowledge of the uses of language will vary greatly from one student to another. The ESL student, for example, will have knowledge of another language, whereas some English-speaking students will be familiar with many varieties of English, but not necessarily with all those required in particular social situations.

The content of usage instruction must be based on the knowledge the student has of usage, and on the situations that can be provided by the teacher, the school, and the community. It must also be designed to help students to become aware of the appropriate alternatives and to select from them and use them effectively.

The following is a small sample of activities that might be helpful in increasing the effectiveness of the students' language performance.

1. *Levels of Language*

   Students can:

   - illustrate peer group language by taping or recording "schoolyard language" and "classroom language" used in their school;

   - record language and game rhymes (skipping, ball games) of Primary grades;

- if feasible, exchange findings with another class or school;

- discuss the differences between: (a) the language used by the old and that used by the young; (b) the language used in the classroom and that used outside the classroom; (c) the languages of two different regions.

2. *Language Dialects*

Students can:

- tape the dialogue of different TV personalities;

- discuss differences in language usage, accent, etc.;

- use dialect poetry from various sources to show further differences.

3. *Language Usage*

- Students tape an interview on a given topic with four different students from *widely differing* age groups; they then study the contrast in language usage.

4. *Levels of Language*

- Students explain (orally) why they were late for school to: the principal, their best friend, a policeman, a brother or sister, a parent. (Other students can act the role of listener.)

5. *Levels of Writing*

- Students can analyse constructions used in various parts of a newspaper – the sports section, the financial section, advertisements, social notes, etc. They can then try to write in the same style for (a) the class newspaper, (b) a historical newspaper (suitable for a history assignment), (c) a science newspaper.

6. *Comparative Syntax*

- Students draft sentences or paragraphs illustrating the way a particular topic might be discussed by: a scientist, a historian, a reporter, a mother, a principal. They then compare the various language patterns. (An important resource for this assignment would be taped extracts from the media, from conversations in everyday life, from novels, from scientific lectures, etc.)

- Older students can draft sentences or paragraphs employing Elizabethan syntax – e.g., "Know ye not that . . . ".

7. *The Use and Study of the Sentence*

This type of activity illustrates the way in which *ad hoc* study of usage may lead into the study of grammar. By the Intermediate Division years many students will be writing easily and with increasing complexity; therefore, if the teacher judges it appropriate, *short study units* on sentence types, orders, and forms could be undertaken. Such units should be compact, immediately related to, and within the context of a larger piece of writing on a topic of interest to the students.

- Teachers may base units on material found in any of the language texts listed in *Circular 14*. Units may relate to topics such as: sentence types, construction, and punctuation; the sentence forms used for variety and style in a paragraph; and sentence unity – subject, predicate, time and pronoun reference.

– Sentence order – natural, split, or inverted – is dealt with less frequently in texts, but sources where such units may be found are well worth noting, as knowledge of sentence order is often useful in solving writing problems (e.g., problems related to unity).

– Teacher-designed units should be compact and concerned with only one area; discussing form and type in one lesson may confuse students.

– Punctuation can be corrected by having students read aloud and helping them become aware of the functions of the various forms in making the written word clear to the reader. The meaning of fused or incomplete sentences may become obvious when read aloud.

– When deciding which topics to teach, the teacher should look at the students' writing in other subject areas. One of the dangers of checking only the English papers becomes apparent when they are compared to other written work. Students often think that an English assignment needs a much more elevated and complicated form of writing, and they begin to write in a stilted and unnatural way. Similarly, they may assume that form and correctness are unimportant in other subject areas.

8. *Idiom and Logic*

Students could be asked what would happen if one applied logic to certain idiomatic expressions in English. Might one assume that:

a) a hair-raising experience is a cure for baldness?
b) if one dropped one's eyes, they could roll under the desk?
c) one might need a setting lotion to curl one's lip?
d) one's hearing would be impaired if one were to lend someone an ear?
e) stretching one's legs is a form of medieval torture?

These examples would make students realize how difficult it would be to translate idioms into another language. Students could be asked to find several other English idioms that would be misleading if approached logically or literally.

Encouraging students to edit, correct, and polish

Growth in *communicative competence* or knowledge of usage is most clearly demonstrated in a student's written work. As the aims of usage instruction elaborated on pages 58-59 are achieved, students should become more and more involved in the revision of their own written work. The following are some methods of editing, correcting, and generally encouraging clear, concise writing suited to the stated purposes.

1. As stated in the section on the development of writing abilities, the first priority of an English teacher is to provide frequent and regular opportunities for writing. One paragraph a day on a topic and in a style or form selected by the student is a reasonable assignment.
2. Students should be helped to understand that even professional writers are unsatisfied with their first drafts; they should come to accept that editing and polishing of one's own work is the norm. Whatever they hand in should be the best that they can do. First drafts should not normally be corrected by the teacher.

3. Another way of encouraging students to edit and polish their first drafts is to have them work with partners. Each student is instructed to edit his partner's work. At first students should be given comparatively simple editing tasks, such as checking spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc. Bonus marks can be given for editing a paragraph well. Conversely, the student who does a poor job of editing his partner's work may have points subtracted from his total. As sentence forms are discussed, they may be added to the points to be considered in editing.

4. Final versions of daily paragraphs can be kept in a folder and checked by the teacher. The checking should focus on form and style, with spelling and punctuation errors only circled. The best two or three can be read aloud, with the students' permission, to give the rest of the class ideas for future writing. The folder can be reviewed by the teacher and the student at regular intervals to assess progress. The folders will also be useful in identifying specific usage problems and areas of weakness that need special attention, or in pointing up the need for the introduction of some descriptive terminology that would facilitate feedback to the student.

5. Once students are writing and gaining confidence in their ability to put their thoughts on paper, the teacher may assign specific writing tasks. At this stage (or earlier, if necessary) the teacher may also begin to ask for a longer, more sustained effort on the part of the student. Some members of the class may feel confident in their ability to undertake this longer assignment before others are ready to do so; usually this encourages the less venturesome students to make the attempt.

6. When students are writing well, they can begin to take note of the ways authors use language in their works. They can discuss with some understanding the use of language to evoke emotions, add emphasis, and persuade (or delude) the reader. The teacher can make a point of comparing authors and styles; for example, the journalistic style of a Gregory Clark could be compared with the stark style of Inuit storytellers. The teacher can read a legend or tall tale and contrast it with a factual, historical account of an event. A short story and a poem on a single theme can be compared, or a dialogue written in script form can be compared with one in running paragraph form, and so on.

7. An excellent way to encourage better writing and more effective use of various sentence forms is to make use of the students' writings. A collection of tall tales, short stories on a single theme, or a group of modernized legends could easily be reproduced within the school. The "published" works could be sold to raise money for a school project or simply handed out throughout the school. A good play or short dialogues could be acted out in a special program. Editorial writing and various letter forms should be sent to the appropriate people when possible. However, the student should always be consulted in this regard, as many students may not wish to have their personal writings made public.

To encourage students to continue to experiment and make use of their new knowledge, the teacher should note student progress often. By the end of the Intermediate grades, students should write often, and with a degree of competence and complexity commensurate with their intellectual, social, and emotional maturity. It is not necessary that all students have a complete, conscious grasp of all the technicalities, but only that they be aware of different styles and purposes in writing and that they be able to adapt with relative ease to the requirements of a specific topic. Many students, however, will begin to demonstrate through their writing and other work a fair level of *communicative competence* and some signs of *analytic competence.* Such students are ready for the activities described on the pages that follow – activities that will allow even more precise editing and polishing of their written work.

Grammar

Aims

The program should provide opportunities for most students to:

1. *take language seriously;*

   – regard language study as a way of solving problems of reasoning and communication;

   – appreciate the significance and ingenuity of the linguistic choices made by writers and speakers;

   – develop confidence in their own use of language;

   – be sensitive to the needs and expectations of others in the area of language;

   – learn to suspend judgement about the quality of language used until they have described it as perceptively as they can.

2. *give and receive, with facility, feedback concerning usage;*

   – use grammatical examples, concepts, generalizations, and principles, and simple, accurate terminology, *where these are clearly understood by all involved in the discussion* and where they will speed, refine, and extend students' understanding of meaning in the study of literature, in the writing program, and in the study of usage.

3. *begin to describe accurately the principles that underlie language;*

   – treat the language as systems of relations of equivalence and contrast between elements;

   – attempt to describe the relationships that hold within the language systems that underlie and are common to spoken utterances and written sentences;

   – understand the cultural, social, and political reasons for promoting wider acceptance of Standard English, and for valuing non-standard dialects.

Activities

Initially[1] any study of grammar should be conducted on an *ad hoc* basis. Most of the activities outlined in other parts of the document, especially those suggested for literature, writing, and usage, can provide starting points for the development of concepts, generalizations, principles, and procedures. The following teacher-directed activities also indicate some directions.

1. *Nouns*

   a) Talk about "nounness" or the labelling of things so that everyone can understand what you are talking about. Have students collect nouns from various sources (they could look at objects around them, as well as at print sources such as books and newspapers). Who has the longest noun? The shortest? The most extraordinary? Who has an abstract noun? A collective noun? Does anyone have a noun that is unknown to the rest of the class? *(Encourage the students to use the dictionary.)* Pluralize the nouns: Are there any general rules?

   b) What percentage of the words in our language are nouns? Have each student choose a page in a dictionary. Each student counts the number of words on his page, then the number of nouns, and then calculates the percentage on his page. All the percentages are averaged to find the average for the dictionary. (The total number of words in the dictionary is usually given on the title page or in the preface.)

   c) Encourage students to keep a notebook for the special vocabulary used in other subjects. A notebook in which students jot down new words (in alphabetical order) as they are encountered can become a handy mini-dictionary and a useful reference when doing an assignment in another subject. (Talk to other teachers about putting a glossary of difficult words on the board before the lesson and having the students fill in meanings as the lesson progresses.)

2. *Adjectives*

   Look at advertisements in the newspaper. Identify adjectives. Discuss their use for the purpose of luring buyers. Discuss positive and negative aspects of certain adjectives. Substitute negative adjectives in an advertisement and read the result aloud to the class.

3. *Adverbs*

   Add *ly* to a number of adjectives. Do the resulting words have meaning? Do they make a separate class? What is their function? (They are called adverbs and modify verbs.) Are there any adjectives that cannot be changed in this way?

4. *Subject Predicate*

   One student writes a noun phrase and folds the paper so that it cannot be seen. Another student writes a predicate. The resulting sentence is read aloud. The class discusses the parts of the sentence as "actor" and "acting" or theme and comment (remembering "passives").

5. *Noun Phrase*

   a) Review forms of noun phrase: (i) proper noun, (ii) pronoun, (iii) adjective and noun, (iv) determiner and adjective and noun.

1. Probably when the student has reached Stage 2 or 3 in the writing program, and Stage 3 or 4 in the reading program.

b) Noun phrase uses should be discovered by working through a paragraph: (i) subject, (ii) object, (iii) object of preposition, (iv) completion after a form of *be*.

6. *Parts of Speech*

Make up stories using nonsense words. (Read Jabberwocky as an example.) Use plural and possessive endings on nouns; *ed*, *ing*, *s*, and other endings on verbs; and so on. If stories tend to become very long, add a brief dictionary.

7. *Mechanics of a Language*

If students know, or are studying, another language, discuss differences in word order, sentence structure, etc. (Discuss this with teachers of the other languages first.)

8. *Language Learning*

Tape or record the speech of two- and three-year-olds at nursery school or in the home. Show how these children are learning to make proper choices; for example:

me go ⟶ *I* go
foots ⟶ feet
I *be* going ⟶ I *am* going

Systematic Study

The following is an example of an approach that might be useful in beginning a systematic study of descriptive grammar.

1. The teacher, in planning activities, should ensure that the students:

   - focus on ways of discovering and describing the elements and structure of language, as opposed to rote-memorization of definitions;

   - study contemporary language first, and perhaps the state of language at certain points in its development, instead of dwelling on the historical flow of language change;

   - have recourse to speech as the primary substance of language, regarding written language as generally a way of representing speech in another mode or medium;

   - examine, in the first instance, how people actually speak and write, rather than form rigid ideas about how they *ought to* speak and write;

   - become interested in a range of languages.

2. The teacher should lead students to understand and use grammatical concepts, generalizations, and principles such as the following:

   - *varieties of English:* Standard English; varieties according to region, social and educational standing, subject matter, medium, and attitude to audience and content;

   - *the parts of speech:* verbs and verb phrases; nouns, pronouns, and noun phrases; adjectives and adverbs; prepositions and prepositional phrases;

   - ways of making necessary distinctions between parts of speech and between types of verbs, nouns, etc.;

   - *the simple sentence and its elements:* clauses, patterns, subject, predicate, object, complement, adjuncts, disjuncts, conjuncts;

- ways of distinguishing, when necessary, between clause types;
- *clause-combining:* co-ordination, apposition, time relaters, logical connectors, substitution, reference, ellipsis, complex sentences;
- focus, theme, and emphasis within the sentence; the interface with rhetoric;
- *punctuation:* the period, comma, semi-colon, colon, quotation marks, the hyphen, brackets for parenthesizing, italics, etc.

Method

It is likely that students attempting to use standard grammatical forms will experience some difficulty with fragment sentences which are common in informal usage. At this point the teacher might introduce the concept that a sentence contains an element that is given, which is often left out in ellipsis, and an element that is new, which is usually retained. The student could infer this from numerous examples in which the theme is the subject and the comment is the predicate. The teacher could introduce the terms *subject* and *predicate* incidentally at first, but the main point at this stage would be to have the student learn, when using Standard English, to state the given as well as the new, and so to write sentences that have both a subject and a predicate. Often pronouns are used to state the given item in such sentences, and now the terms *pronoun* and *noun* could be introduced, after numerous examples from the students' work have been examined. At this stage, terminology is introduced primarily to facilitate feedback from teacher to student or between students concerning the quality of written work.

When the terms *subject, predicate, noun,* and *pronoun* have been used many times, the teacher could pull together the examples that have been used in the discussions and teach the terminology more formally, reinforcing it with a prepared exercise and applying it in the study of a piece of literature or student writing.

Next, the teacher might move on to sentences in which the predicate, the object, or the complement is given, and so establish terms such as *verb, auxiliary, operator, object, complement,* and *adjective.*

As these major terms are clearly understood, the teacher might lead the class to a higher level of sophistication by looking at the kinds of subjects available, the kinds of pronouns, procedures for making distinctions, and so on, and the way in which choices between these determine meaning.

This kind of study should never supplant student writing and reading, but should always be rooted in examples that the students have understood and used. In addition, such study should be carefully timed to facilitate the students' reading and writing, should be systematically taught and reinforced when the student has been readied, and should be put to immediate and continuing use. With less able students who are in the early stages of Intermediate Division English, little or no time should be spent on terminology; with those who are well advanced, quite a lot of time should be alloted to studies that contribute directly or indirectly to their ability to describe language accurately.

Origins of English

For some advanced students, a study of the history of the English language may be of great interest. By beginning with the oral traditions of Old English and following the main examples of written English through Chaucer, Shakespeare, Pope, and Wordsworth to modern-day writers (but focusing on early modern to late modern), the student can be led to appreciate the evolution of the English language and the variety of changes that have taken place in the preceding nine hundred years. By seeing and understanding the evolutionary nature of the English language and the effects that various languages have had on it over the years, the student becomes more perceptive of the changes taking place in the language in our time.

Further study of the finer points of English syntactic structure might be undertaken with students who are ready to proceed with further language studies. Experimentation with styles and forms used by accredited authors might form the focus of an interesting study. An analysis of different writing styles constitutes a more advanced level of investigation.

Resources

The student's own writing and the writing of other students constitute one important resource.

The literature that students study in depth and the other varieties of language that they read critically constitute another resource.

The teacher will find H.A. Gleason's *Linguistics and English Grammar* helpful in outlining an eclectic approach. Lyon's *An Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics*[2] provides an interesting account of the development of language study for the teacher.

In deciding what terminology to use in the classroom, teachers are advised to adhere to that used in Quirk and Greenbaum's book, *A University Grammar of English*,[3] though a simpler introduction is provided in B. Strang's *Modern English Structure*.[4]

P. Doughty's *Language in Use*[5] contains a multitude of activities for the classroom. It is not a student textbook, but a teacher's handbook. It has the advantage that it can be used by students and teachers who have not been trained in linguistics.

Evaluation

The grammar and usage component of the program should not normally count for more than 10 to 15 per cent of the total time allotted to English, even for able students. Successful teaching of usage and grammar will be reflected in the students' speech, reading, writing, and literature work.

2. John Lyons, *An Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968).
3. Randolph Quirk and S. Greenbaum, *A University Grammar of English* (London: Longmans, Green, 1973).
4. Barbara Strang, *Modern English Structure* (London: E. Arnold, 1968).
5. Peter Doughty, *Language in Use* (London: E. Arnold; Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1971).

Spelling

The practice, formerly almost universal, of making spelling nearly, if not entirely, an oral exercise, failed to secure proficiency in the art, since many who could readily spell whole columns of words on hearing them pronounced, would not be able to write a single sentence orthographically correct. Spelling is more easily and more accurately acquired by the *eye* than by the *ear*. Recently a most marked improvement, in this respect, is observable in our schools, and this pleasing change is mainly to be attributed to a different method of teaching, happily now very generally adopted. Intelligent and successful teachers use the reading lessons as exercises in spelling, giving out the words with which the pupil has already become acquainted, in their connection; and so soon as the learners can write on slate or paper, lessons by dictation are assigned them.

– *The Spelling-Book: Companion to the Readers,* Canadian Series of School-Books (Toronto: Wm. Warwick, 1868). Authorized by the Council of Public Instruction for Ontario, 1868.

The Spelling Program

Spelling is an essential tool for communicating effectively in writing; misspelling blocks communication. The student should learn that spelling words correctly in written work is more important than spelling them correctly in lists. This means that the content of the spelling program should come primarily from the context of the student's own writing and reading in every subject area.

A class spelling program should incorporate both formal and informal approaches and should provide all students with regular, systematic instruction. It should offer language enrichment to able spellers, as well as individual guidance and extended directed spelling activities to those lacking proficiency.

By using varied approaches, by involving students intellectually in the search for new vocabulary, and by encouraging experimentation with words, the teacher nurtures a positive attitude towards spelling. Approaches may be built on such items as the following:

- sound-to-letter correspondence
- word-building
- word meanings
- dictionary research
- writing conventions (i.e., capital letters, apostrophes, etc.)
- study of word origins
- spelling generalizations
- underlying principles – e.g., spelling as a conveyor of semantic information (*way, weigh*), phonological information, syntactic information (*-ed, -tion, -s*)
- the probable, possible, improbable, and impossible combinations of letters (do words begin with *Tt*? what follows *q*?).

Some Approaches to Teaching Spelling

1. Towards Independence: A Class Approach

Initially, some teachers may feel more comfortable using *a class approach*, with all students in the class studying the same list. In the early stages of spelling development, this basic spelling list – which should be very short – will be compiled by the teacher. The purpose of these structured lessons is to develop a "spelling conscience", that is, the *gradual assumption of responsibility by students* for their own spelling skill. As this is acquired, students move towards a second stage in which they develop their own personal study lists. At the beginning of a new week or cycle, each student should be encouraged to develop a personal list of words. Effective spelling programs can be based on lists compiled by:

- the teacher
- the teacher working together with students
- the students alone.

Lists may be drawn from various sources and may comprise the following:

a) words misspelled in student writings

b) the specialized vocabulary used in other subject areas

c) word families that reflect common elements and letter patterns, for example:

cop/cope
view/review/preview
mention/detention/convention

d) irregular spellings that present difficulties, for example:

rough, enough
ought, thought
though, although

e) words that students have heard or read and want to learn to use

f) interesting words related to the derivations or origins of English

g) words that demonstrate rules related to affixes and inflectional endings.

Using such elements and groupings to develop either class or individualized lists that meet spelling needs, the teacher can help the students become increasingly aware of the relationship of correct spelling not only to language studies but also to geography, history, science, mathematics, and, indeed, to any area of study that requires the student to write.

Students should be shown a method by which they can effectively study the spelling of words. They should be given practice in using this method, and their practice should be monitored by the teacher to ensure that no time is wasted.

Students who are very concerned about correct spelling may be reluctant to try out new words as they write. Thus, unwittingly, they may deny themselves the opportunity to develop new ideas in writing, as well as new vocabulary and the skill to spell new words correctly.

A successful spelling program is one in which students feel confident enough to test their spelling skills by:

i) using words from their personal spelling lists in follow-up writing activities;
ii) trying out new vocabulary;
iii) checking current writing against back lists to evaluate their own usage and skill consolidation.

2. **Using Student Errors**

This approach is based solely on the misspelled words found in students' work in all subject areas. At the start of the week, an attempt is made to intellectually motivate students and to encourage them to accept personal responsibility for learning to spell. Students with specific problems will need more structured help from the teacher, once the first dictation has established specific problem areas. As students exhibit proficiency in spelling, they may be excused from the structured program and may begin to construct their personal spelling lists, which can be approved by the teacher on an individual basis.

Day 1
20-30 minutes

The teacher hands out copies of the spelling list (15-20 words), then *briefly* discusses the reasons for his choice of words and the nature of the errors made by the students. One activity is chosen from the following suggestions.

Alphabet game

a) Students, working as a class or in small groups, alphabetize the list. *One student, preferably a weak speller, serves as secretary to the group.*

b) The groups check the spelling of all the words against the original list.

Teacher-made crossword

The teacher maps out words from the spelling list on squared centimetre paper. He then numbers the rows across at the beginning of each word used and writes *Across* and *Down* at the bottom and sides. Finally, he makes up a list of clues.

Variations: The teacher could make crossword puzzles in the shape of a spaceship, a province, a country, a geometric figure, or other items of topical interest to the class.

Syllabification exercise

a) Working alone, students divide words into syllables.

b) Working as a class or in small groups, they discuss reasons for the divisions. (Good spellers make effective leaders.)

c) They check to see if everyone has the same divisions.

d) They use the dictionary as the arbiter.

Word classes: changing exercise

a) Working in small groups, students divide the list into word classes: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc.

b) They change the tenses of the verbs listed. (If a verb is in the past tense, they change it to the present tense, and so on.)

c) Students change adjectives to adverbs, and adverbs to adjectives.

d) Students pluralize singular nouns, and vice versa.

Giggle sentences

Students write sentences using as many words as possible from the list in a single sentence.

Day 2
20-30 minutes

Using some or all of the words on the original list, students participate in one or two of the following extended word games and exercises.

Syllable scramble

Each student divides the words on his list into syllables; he then prints each syllable on a small piece of paper. (It is important that all students use the same size of paper and print.) The pieces of paper are placed in a bag or box and jumbled. The group then tries to reassemble its members' individual lists.

Student crosswords

Students make up their own crossword on squared centimetre graph paper. They post these on the wall for others to try.

I'm thinking of a word that means...

In response to the definition given by one student, another must spell the word without looking at the list. If he is right, he gives the next definition; if wrong, he misses a turn.

Tic-tac-toe

The player puts an *X* or *O* in a square only if he can spell the word from the list that his opponent chooses. (The game Fish could be played by the same principle.)

Day 3
20-30 minutes

Test dictation is given by the teacher. Students with five or fewer mistakes may use the day 4 and 5 periods for quiet language activities of their own choice. As dictation can be a tedious activity if always presented in the same format, interest may be sustained by using the students' own giggle sentences one week, teacher-made sentences another week, and word lists at another time.

Day 4

The teacher directs the drill and review of mistakes made on the previous day's test, giving specific help with:
- trouble words
- syllables
- inflectional problems
- affixes
- phonetic problems.

Day 5

Final dictation is given to those who practised on day 4. Only words that were misspelled on the day-3 test are dictated. The teacher varies the dictation format as suggested above.

3. The Principles Approach

Some underlying principles of English spelling, while basically acknowledged and generally useful in any approach to spelling, suggest specific ways of looking at spelling which encourage students to focus on the internal structure of the words they need to learn – a most important aspect of learning to spell. The following notes merely indicate directions.

a) *Spelling as a Conveyor of Semantic Information*
Students are encouraged to analyse and look for the origins and roots of words such as:

discord, discothèque
reign, rain
umbra, umbrella
manifest, manifold
phonograph, phonology
joule, quisling, boycott

b) *Spelling as a Conveyor of Syntactic Information*
The students' attention is drawn to endings such as *-tion* (as in compet*ition* or repet*ition*). The relationship of the verb to the noun forms is discussed; other examples are sought. Students can then discuss and compare the forms:

Jane loves *to compete.*
Jane loves *competition.*
Jane loves *competing.*

Students should be encouraged to manipulate combinations such as:

perpetuity – perpetuate
repetition – repeat
degradation – degrade

Similarly, students' attention can be drawn to the information conveyed by endings such as *-ed* or *-s*. They should, for example, compare *We predict a late spring* with *We predicted a late spring,* noting the substantial change in meaning effected by the addition of *-ed*.

c) *Spelling and Phonological Information*
Even a limited understanding of the phonological relationships between the sounds and letters of English orthography can be of great assistance in learning to spell, for English has more regularity in this respect than was formerly thought.

Most modern linguistic spelling programs or texts have a range of activities using this approach.

d) *General Principle*
Students should be helped to become aware that syntactic and semantic considerations will sometimes override phonological considerations in spelling – e.g., the noun-marker */shun/* is always spelled *-tion, -cion,* or *-sion,* but never *shun*.

4. Test-Study/Test-Plan Approach

In this procedure, the teacher draws up a short list of words, perhaps a dozen, that would seem to be essential for the group's vocabulary growth. The task begins with dictation. The work is checked – by partners, teachers, or students – and each student identifies the words that he needs to work on. Students who have very few or no errors in the class list would use the time to develop and study supplemental word lists based on their own problems and interests.

5. Multi-sensory Approach

This approach is useful in working with students who are having unusual difficulties.

First, the teacher makes sure that students are pronouncing the problem word correctly. The students then place their fingers lightly on their lips as they say the word, *slightly exaggerating lip movement as they do so*. Next, students pronounce the word while writing it on the desk with their forefingers. They then close their eyes to visualize the word in their minds, and then rewrite it with their fingers on the desk. When students feel that they can write the word without hesitancy, they write it in their notebooks.

6. Discovery Approach

A discovery approach challenges the intellect of proficient or more able spellers.

Students work in pairs, each with a pack of letter cards. They each cut their cards to reveal a letter – *s* and *c*, for instance. Using a dictionary, they try to discover whether the combinations *sc* and *cs* are probable, possible, improbable, or impossible sequences of letters at the beginning, the end, or in the middle of English words. They can chart their findings. Other students may challenge them.

Sample Combination	Probable	Possible	Improbable	Impossible
SC	beginning: science scissors	middle: conscious	end: disc	—
CS	—	—	middle?	end?
AM	beginning: amount middle: hammer end: tram	—	—	—
MA	beginning: material middle: command	end: dogma comma	—	—
SR	—	in the middle of compound words: crossroads	beginning?	end?
RS	middle: parse end: cars	—	beginning?	—
XY	—	end: foxy beginning: xylophone	—	—
YX	—	—	middle?	beginning? end?
TT	middle: rattle	—	end?	beginning?

7. Pairs Approach

Students work in pairs. Each pair keeps a list of problem words that present difficulties because of their irregularity or unfamiliarity. (This strategy should encourage youngsters to use words in their writing that they are familiar with but cannot yet spell.) The list is periodically examined and approved by the teacher, and is used as the basis for the pair's study, exercises, and dictation tests. In checking tests, the correct spelling should be recorded beside each error. All students should be required to keep a record of their own corrections for future testing.

Tests should be carried out on a regular, systematic basis throughout the year.

8. Spelling Centre Approach

Spelling is an area of learning that lends itself well to activities and games. Competition adds zest to what otherwise might appear dull and routine, and the interaction provided by the game-like structure reinforces student learning.

Activities for a spelling centre might be designed around the following:

- sound-to-letter correspondence
- word-building
- word meaning
- derivations
- word origins
- dictionary hunts

a) *Spelling to Rule*

By means of examples written on teacher-made cards, the students discover certain letter patterns or sequencing from which they can infer a rule or principle.

-ar, -or, -er endings – *calendar, doctor, tutor, learner, stellar*
sc words – *science, scion, conscious, schottische, scissors*
-on and *-en* endings – *weapon, happen, reason, written, lenten, piston, octagon*
-ate and *-et* endings – *senate, faucet, debate, hesitate, meditate, temperate, legislate, puppet, legate*

Using the resource materials in the classroom (the dictionary, textbooks, basal readers, spellers, paperbacks), the students try to find other words that follow the rule. Words can be recorded on a card or on the blackboard so that similarities and differences in sound and spelling can be discussed.

b) ***Word-Building: I Am Thinking of a Word – What Is It?***

One student thinks of a word and indicates – on the blackboard or on a piece of paper – the number of letters in the word by drawing a blank for each.

He begins the game by asking, "What is the first letter?" Each student may have five tries; if none of them has identified the first letter, it is supplied by the first player. The same procedure is followed until students have supplied all the missing letters. The students will have to apply their knowledge of letter sequencing[1] and sound-to-letter correspondence in order to identify the letters quickly. Discussion of the words will emerge naturally from the activity.

t o d _ _

m a c h _ _ _

c) ***Word Meaning***

Connotative meanings

The students are divided into five teams or groups. The teacher writes a word – *bar*, for example – on the blackboard. The students take five minutes to write sentences illustrating as many different meanings of the word as possible. On the first round, each team gains one point for each member's correct use of the word; on the second round, each gets two points for each new correct response; on the third round, three points, and so on. Teams may challenge each other and act as the final arbiter. Much interesting discussion will emerge about the meanings, the words, and the validity of student responses as the game proceeds.

Analogies

i) The teacher writes sets of words on coloured cards (one set on each card) and places the cards in envelopes; for example:

cliff	*precipice*	*sandbar*	*bank*
vote	*election*	*ballot*	*lot*
farming	*agriculture*	*husband*	*husbanding*
captain	*player*	*king*	*principal*
rule	*governor*	*legislate*	*govern*
freight	*ate*	*eight*	*weight*

The students are instructed to identify the three words in each set that relate to each other in some way. Students should be prepared to defend their answers to their group. There might sometimes be more than one appropriate relationship.

ii)

challenge	*hockey*	*fun*	*baseball*	*excitement*
referee	*stick*	*goalie*	*puck*	*defence*
salary	*tax*	*earn*	*income*	*pay*
negotiate	*contract*	*compact*	*agreement*	*agree*
imperialism	*communism*	*monarchy*	*socialism*	*capitalism*

Relate *three* words in each row in such a way that the *two* remaining words are also related.

The words may be written on cards that are placed in envelopes and filed in a box in the spelling centre so that students may use them in free as well as in assigned time.

The students can make up analogy cards for others to use.

1. See "The Principles Approach", p. 72.

d) ***Derivations***

Word assembling

The teacher records prefixes, suffixes, and root words, with their meanings, on cards. The students are asked to assemble the parts of a word and its meaning in the last column. Some parts of words will be used more than once. The students check their work with peers.

Prefixes		*Roots*		*Suffixes*	
de-	– down from, away	*port*	– carry	*-ed*	– tending to
re-	– back again	*duct*	– lead	*-er*	– one who
ex-	– from, out of, formerly	*vise*	– see, behold	*-ation*	– the act of
sur-	– under, after	*lect*	– choose, pick	*-ant*	– one who
sup-	– under, after			*-ion*	– the state of, the act of
com-	– with, together with	*press*	– press	*-ive*	– tendency to, having the nature of
in-	– in, into			*-or*	– one who
im-	– in, into			*-al*	– the act of
ab-	– from, away from			*-ate*	– resembling
ad-	– to, towards			*-ment*	– the act of

Prefix+ Meaning	*Root+ Meaning*	*Suffix+ Meaning*	*Word+ Meaning*
re: backward	*press:* press	*-ive:* tendency to	*repressive:* denoting a tendency to press backwards

e) ***Word Origins***

Assignment Cards

i) The teacher writes the following words on cards, which are placed in an envelope.

construct	*perambulate*
expectorate	*prevaricate*
pedagogue	*canine*
palfrey	*lunatic*

The assignment card should read:

Use your dictionary to find a simple synonym for each of these words which have classical origins.

Watch for abbreviations following the word entry; they indicate the origin of the words. Classify the words under these headings:

OE – Old English L – Latin LL – Late Latin
F – French OF – Old French

ii) The following words are written on cards, which are placed in an envelope.

spoonerism	*bikini*	*volt*
America	*pompadour*	*guillotine*
quisling	*Dixie*	*hamburger*
January	*maverick*	*guy*

The student chooses a word card from the cards in the envelope. Using a dictionary or encyclopedia, he establishes the word's connection with a person, god, or place.

Slanguage

i) Students are asked to place each of the expressions that follow into one of these categories: (a) slang; (b) colloquial English; (c) Standard English.

She's on the ball.
She's alert.
She's on her toes.

He's chicken.
He's frightened.
He's scared.

They bombed out.
They blew it.
They failed.

She's rather attractive.
She's a real doll.
She's sort of pretty.

That's strange.
That's funny.
That's goofy.

He's a nice fellow.
He's a real right guy.
He's a pleasant man.

Heaps of people.
A great many people.
Lots of people.

ii) In each group, students take turns to explain what each expression means.

iii) Each of these expressions might be used appropriately in certain circumstances. The students think of an appropriate situation (time, place) for each expression.

iv) Students think of the different types of people who might use each variety of language.

f) ***Dictionary Hunts***

Using task cards, the teacher directs pairs of students to turn to certain pages of the dictionary by prescribing alphabetical limits – for example:

insure – intent
nurture – O
pistol – piton

The task cards give the students the necessary instructions.

Task card 1: How many 5-syllable words can you find and record accurately in *3 minutes?*

Task card 2: Record all the compound words listed on the page. (*5 minutes*)

Task card 3: List all the nouns (or verbs, or adjectives, etc.) given in the first column. (Set a time limit.)

Task card 4: From the *re-edify–repel* page, record which words may take *re* as a prefix. (*5 minutes*)

Students check their work for accuracy with other members of their group.

g) *Additional Material*

In addition, a spelling centre may contain some of the usual commercial games, such as Scrabble, Spello, Scribbage, and Lexicon – as well as dictionaries that students should be encouraged to use with the games.

Each week, or every other week, teachers should record sample dictation passages, songs, puzzles, or rhymes on cassette tapes that students can use for independent work.

Hard-to-motivate students are often interested in learning the words of the latest folk song. Writing out the words of a song while listening to a recording is a form of dictation and provides practice in both auditory discrimination and spelling.

Error Analysis

It is more profitable to look for patterns in misspelling and to analyse the student's errors than to focus on the *number* of errors made. A student who writes the words *teacher* and *foreign* as (A) *teecher* and *forane* has different tutoring needs from one who spells them as (B) *taecher* or *teahcer* and *foerign*, (C) *teachur* and *forign* or *forin*, or (D) *tehr* and *folne*.

Student (A) (*teecher, forane*) is relying on the sound of words and should be encouraged to give more attention to the visual aspects. Student (B) (*taecher, foerign*) is relying on visual recall and may profit from some attention to phonics and the more usual English letter combinations. Student (C) (*teachur, forign*) may be mispronouncing the words. A student who writes the words as *tehr* or *folne* is manifesting difficulties that may or may not have been diagnosed, and would seem to need exceptional treatment.

Other patterns may emerge. Students may omit, transpose, insert, or double letters. They may use the wrong homonyms, or fail to recognize irregular spelling. In any event, it should not be inferred from the above that diagnosis is a simple process; observation and analysis of errors over a period of time are often necessary before a recognizable pattern emerges.

Occasionally, all that becomes obvious is that a student has not developed any consistent method of approach to spelling. In such cases, a personal program, jointly planned by teacher and student, can provide some objectives and strategies for improving the student's competency.

Evaluation

Ultimately, the only valid measure of spelling performance lies in the student's use of the words encountered in the spelling program in his day-to-day writing. Some children appear to do well in their daily writing only because they avoid words of which they are unsure. All need to be encouraged to experiment, to try out newly acquired words *in context*, and to appreciate the power of a solid vocabulary. Teachers should show that they, too, keep a dictionary on their desks and refer to it to check words when unsure.

If marking of lists seems occasionally necessary, the following marking scheme may be less discouraging to the weaker spellers:

Marking out of 100, deduct

5 marks for the first two errors;
2 marks for the next five errors;
1 mark each for the next five errors;
½ mark each for remaining errors.

References

Thomas, Ves. *Teaching Spelling: Canadian Word Lists and Instructional Techniques.* Toronto: Gage, 1974.
Although directed primarily to Primary-Junior teachers, this text presents ideas that will be of interest to all elementary teachers.

Literature

Introduction

There is more than one view of literature or, more precisely, more than one theory as to what can legitimately be regarded as literature. There is the view that anything written is literature. There is the view that anything recorded – through language, film, tape, or any other means – is literature. A third, more restricted view sees literature as writing that bears repeated reading and in-depth study. The common element in each view is language, and it is this element that this guideline emphasizes without denying the potential of the other elements.

Although this guideline emphasizes the pursuit of excellence in the mastery of language, it recognizes the role that various types of writing can play in this pursuit, for the critical faculty cannot be developed without an examination of various materials, and no one would deny that such development is essential to the personal growth of each student. At the same time, this section is guided primarily by the assumption that most people subscribe to a view of literature as writing that *bears* and *merits* in-depth study; in other words, it advocates exposure to writing that, in form and substance, presents to the student a model of excellence that he can perceive as desirable, fulfilling, exciting, and meaningful.

Program Criteria

General Objectives

1. It follows then that in all grades the material selected for study must be chosen and taught with a sense of responsibility; the objective is to arouse the student's interest and to extend and deepen his understanding of himself, our multicultural society, and the power of language. The hope is that this understanding will continue to grow.
2. In selecting material for study, the teacher should strive to establish an appropriate balance between the contemporary and the traditional, the experimental and the established, the national and the international. No generation or people speaks for itself in isolation, and therefore students should be helped to gain some sense of the sweep of global culture.
3. In presenting such a wealth of material, teachers have several proven methods and purposes, such as:
   - promoting effective listening to, reading of, and talking about, literature;
   - leading students from intensive, teacher-directed study to extensive independent study;
   - varying the length of selections used;
   - encouraging extensive related reading;
   - involving students in identifying setting, and tracing plot and character development;
   - guiding students to the discovery of structure, form, and technique as they pertain to the author's intentions;
   - enabling students to recognize the significance of the context (historical, social, cultural) and medium in which the work was originally produced;

- facilitating the discovery of mythical characters and themes;
- developing response to language and its rhythms;
- involving students in a variety of responses, such as choral reading, role-playing, dramatization;
- enabling students to articulate and share discoveries about literature, both orally and in writing.

4. In the Intermediate Division, the amount of attention given to the formal study of literature must be determined in accordance with the capabilities and needs of students, the objectives of a teacher-designed, integrated program, and the overall aim of increasing language proficiency.
5. The continuing study of literature offers many simultaneous rewards. Its contribution to the student's understanding of language processes is invaluable. Similarly, its contribution – through the vicarious experience it offers – to the student's understanding of the world within and about him cannot be underestimated; literature feeds his intellectual, emotional, ethical, and aesthetic needs.

The language of the pieces chosen for this collection has been carefully regarded. Purity, propriety, perspicuity, and, in many instances, elegance of diction, distinguish them. They are extracted from the works of the most correct and elegant writers. From the sources whence the sentiments are drawn, the reader may expect to find them connected and regular, sufficiently important and impressive, and divested of every thing that is either trite or eccentric. The frequent perusal of such composition naturally tends to infuse a taste for this species of excellence ; and to produce a habit of thinking, and of composing, with judgment and accuracy.

– Lindley Murray, *The English Reader, or, Pieces in Prose and Verse, Selected from the Best Writers* (Toronto: Eastwood & Co., n.d.). Used as a textbook in Ontario schools prior to 1846.

Specific Objectives

1. The student should *experience literature* by:
   a) listening to the oral forms of literature;
   b) reading literature;
   c) watching performances, live or recorded, of literary works.
2. The student should be encouraged to *respond to literature* emotionally, creatively, and reflectively, by:
   a) allowing himself to become emotionally involved with characters, events, ideas, feelings, and language in a work of literature;
   b) discussing or sharing a response with others;
   c) making an intellectual effort to understand a work of literature through its language and structure, through its relationship to his experience and the world he knows, and finally through evaluation of the work;
   d) interpreting a work of literature by enacting it or recreating it in another form;
   e) attempting to create literature.
3. The student should be encouraged to *value literature* by:
   a) reading outside the school curriculum for enjoyment;
   b) recognizing that literature transmits and sustains the values of a culture;
   c) recognizing the many ways in which literature can contribute to self-understanding;
   d) recognizing the many ways in which literature can contribute to one's understanding of others.

General Strategies and Levels of Study

The following levels of study imply general strategies for the study and appreciation of literature of all kinds. Since the students' ability to appreciate what they read is linked to their reading ability, and to the level and depth of their comprehension and understanding, these levels of study are closely related to the stages described in the reading section.

Recognizing and recalling ideas

- acquiring knowledge from informational material
- perceiving plot and setting
- identifying with characters
- responding emotionally to material

Organizing and interpreting ideas

- relating past experiences to reading matter
- discovering key facts, passages, or ideas
- deepening perceptions
- examining character motivation
- perceiving relatedness of plot, character, and setting
- perceiving organization
- organizing knowledge for a given purpose
- perceiving tone, attitude, and mood

- exploring levels of meaning achieved through the use of various literary techniques and devices – e.g., symbols, figurative language, alliteration, syntax, puns
- identifying moral or aesthetic issues

Reading critically and selectively

- perceiving the effects of organization
- applying knowledge of literary classification
- appreciating the effects achieved by linguistic or literary devices
- perceiving relationships between form and content
- examining the text in the context of the period and setting in which it was written
- examining the text critically in the light of biographical information about the author and in the context of his other writings
- evaluating the author's style and bias
- assessing subject matter for significance, validity, and reliability
- developing personal tastes.

Canadian Literature Units

Ten resource guides on Canadian literature have been produced by the Teachers' and Writers' Education Project group under the auspices of the Writers' Development Trust, a non-profit corporation.

One of these resource guides, *Action and Adventure*, produced by a team of teachers from Ontario, contains eleven units specifically designed for students in the Intermediate Division:

1. Growing Up
2. Violent Encounters
3. Historical Adventures
4. Frontiers
5. Native Peoples
6. Folk Tales
7. Animals
8. Winter Brutality
9. Sports
10. Mystery and the Supernatural
11. Science Fiction.

Although each unit has its unique features, all of them contain the following:

- a table of contents
- an introduction
- a list of general aims
- a long list (at times subdivided) of recommended materials
- a bibliography.

The important feature in each case is the list of materials. Items are grouped by genre and author under three headings:

Core: This group consists mostly of novels. The works are suitable for intensive study by the whole class under detailed teacher direction. Accompanying each core title is a two-paragraph annotation – the first a summary, the second a critical assessment – which concludes with a recommendation concerning the grade level at which the work can best be used. A short list of sample activities for students follows.

Complementary: This group complements the core work and can be used in a variety of ways. For instance, the titles can be purchased in small sets and used, in conjunction with related works, by groups of students under light teacher direction. A paragraph of summary and criticism, concluding with a recommendation concerning grade level, is given for each title.

Supplementary: This group is intended for reference. It is recommended that as many titles as possible be purchased for the school library, so that they may be readily available for individual reading and research. Relevant non-print materials such as films and audio-tapes are included under this heading in some instances (in others, they are given under "Related Materials"). Some of the supplementary titles have brief annotations.

By no means definitive, the unit topics are merely intended to illuminate the works by relating them. The eleven units contain far more material than a teacher could possibly use in any given year – or, for that matter, in ten. Teachers thus have an abundance of material from which to choose and ample opportunity to shape the material to their needs – to expand, delete, rework, and modify at will; in short, to make out of this material a resource guide of their own.

The Ministry of Education will make a copy of this resource guide available to every teacher of English in the Intermediate Division.

Specific Strategies

Examples of more specific strategies for using literature are outlined on the following pages under these headings:

1. The Novel
2. The Short Story
3. Poetry
4. Plays
5. Non-Fiction
6. Film and Television
7. The Thematic Approach.

1. The Novel

a) The novel can be used to:
- provide reading practice;
- entertain, stimulate, and involve;
- satisfy hunger for fantasy;
- provide vicarious experience;
- provide a glimpse of life in a particular period or place;
- provide, through exposure to hypothetical situations, practice in problem-solving and especially moral decision-making;

- build or enrich vocabulary;
- provide models of good writing.

b) A novel's genre or type will determine the approach to be taken.

- Good historical novels lend themselves to enrichment purposes, and may be especially suitable for students who do not seem particularly interested in fiction.
- Some "action-packed" novels, while not appropriate for intensive study, can be used to develop fluency in reading.
- Good writing that is at their level of understanding will arouse students' emotions and feelings; they will become involved with the characters.
- Some authors are noted for their ability to create vivid and memorable characters; their works offer valuable insights into character and the complexities of human nature.
- Specific chapters in a novel may lend themselves to particular uses: some may present models of description or narration; others may contain passages of dialogue that students could convert into a script.

c) Novels for whole-class or group use should be chosen to suit the teacher's objectives.

- Teachers should be thoroughly familiar with and should *appreciate* any novel studied in class time.
- The novels read should reflect the experience and maturity of the students. Literature intended specifically for adolescents is preferable to either simplified or overly difficult adult fiction.

d) Appreciation means a thorough awareness of what is involved.

- Those who only enjoy the surface features of a hockey game – the echoing shouts, the colour, the quickly changing patterns formed by the players – do not really appreciate the game. In order to appreciate it, they must understand the rules of the game and, preferably by having tried to play themselves, be aware of the skills and stamina involved in the playing. Only with this awareness can the observers' enjoyment be called *appreciation*.

Similarly, students may enjoy the sounds, the images, and the changing patterns of language in literature without being aware of the techniques used to achieve these effects and, consequently, without appreciating the skill manifest in the writing.

By exploring the possibilities of various linguistic and literary forms in their own writing, and becoming aware, in the process, of the rules of language and the conventions of literature, students might arrive at a more conscious understanding of literature as an art form. Only with this kind of disciplined and knowledgeable awareness can the reader's enjoyment be properly termed appreciation.

e) The student's appreciation depends upon awareness of:
- the writer's aim or purpose;
- the literary techniques and stylistic devices used.

f) By the time the teaching of the novel is completed, the student should be aware that:

i) the writer pursues three related concerns simultaneously:
- setting (time, place, atmosphere)
- plot (action)
- character(s).

ii) these three, woven together, form a design (in some novels, embody a theme) and create an emotional impact – a main feeling, such as fear, tension, excitement, sorrow.

g) The following questions may be used for developing a specific concept such as contrast:

i) Does the reader identify contrasts within the text?
- Within a single character?
- Between two or more aspects of the text?

ii) Does the reader identify contrasts (disparities, incongruities, instances of cognitive dissonance) between the text and his experience?
- Between a character's statement and the reader's understanding of some event or circumstance? (Understanding based, for example, on the student's knowledge of history.)
- Between some facet of the text (e.g., a character's actions, motives, or values) and the reader's own experiences, hopes, or values?

iii) Does the reader identify contrasts outside the text?
- Within himself (e.g., ambivalent feelings, contradictory or incompatible values)?
- Between the responses of two or more readers to the text?
- Between two or more texts?

h) Students can ask themselves these general questions regarding the novel (or any work of literature):
- What variety of language is used?
- What is the novel's structure?
- What features of style are obvious? (Am I aware of any other novels in the same style?)
- When was the novel written?
- Why was it written?
- For whom was it written?
- What attitudes does it express?
- What values does it assert or deny?
- What message (if any) does it convey?

Examples of the Use of the Novel in the Intermediate Division

- *The Boy with an Я in His Hand: A Tale of the Type Riot, 1826* by James Reaney

This novel can be used for:

a) reading practice for reluctant readers;

b) background information on "muddy York" prior to the Rebellion;

c) comparison of the newspaper world of the period with that of today;

d) comparison with other novels of the period (*Rebel in the Trail* by Lynn Cook; *The Only Girl: A Tale of 1837* by Emily P. Weaver);

e) a study of the community newspaper;

f) motivation for beginning a class newspaper;

g) comparison with novels dealing with conspiracy or rebellion in other lands (*The Black Arrow* by R.L. Stevenson; *Sixty-Five* by V.S. Reid).

- *Agouhanna* by Claude Aubry

This novel can be used for:

a) comparison (imagine someone writing a novel about today's adolescents one thousand years from now; how might it begin? end?);

b) enrichment of social studies;

c) a theme on adventure or native peoples;

d) a study of character development (boy to man);

e) examination of values or moral decision-making (e.g., to hunt, or not to hunt);

f) discussion of sex-role stereotyping;

g) discussion of the concept of heroism in various cultures (see *Multiculturalism in Action*, p. 6).

- *The Silver Sword* (also published under the title *Escape from Warsaw*) by Ian Seraillier

This novel can be used for:

a) a study of character development (children growing up surrounded by hostile adults);

b) enrichment of social studies;

c) comparison with novels depicting children in adversity in other lands (*Children of the New Forest* by Capt. F. Marryat; *Luke Baldwin's Vow* by Morley Callaghan; *Two Against the North* by Farley Mowat; *The Cloud With the Silver Lining* by C. Everard Palmer);

d) contrast of reality with the fantasy of tales such as the Narnia series by C.S. Lewis.

- *Then There Were None* by Agatha Christie

This novel can be used for:

a) enjoyment;

b) brain-teasing (a mystery to be solved);

c) examination of the use of plot clues;

d) a study of the genre;

e) comparison with another mystery novel (*Cue for Treason* by Geoffrey Trease).

Sample Activities for Students

In guiding students through some of these activities, the teacher must focus on one objective: to help students become fluent readers; all else will follow.

a) Form as many groups as there are main characters in a selected novel. Allocate a character to each group. As you read, make notes on the character of your group.

b) Keep private notes: "Incidents That Made Me Laugh" or "I Nearly Cried When..." or "This I Don't Believe".

c) Explore the theme. Make a note of other works on the same theme – poems, stories, articles.

d) Choose a theme or subject that interests you personally (horses, sports, Victorians, Indians, love, etc.). Find and make a list of poems, stories, articles, etc., on that theme or subject.

e) Make a list of the characters you would like to be, giving reasons for your choices.

f) Take a chapter or section of a novel and turn it into a radio or TV script, a one-act play, or a comic strip.

g) Consider a novel you have just read: Why did the author choose the novel as a medium? Would another medium have served the purpose better? Use another form (e.g., a ballad) to tell the story.

h) Collect pen portraits or descriptions of items such as costumes or homes that you thought were particularly well written.

i) Make maps or models of the localities described in the novel.

j) Rewrite and illustrate the novel, or part of it, for a Grade 4 class. Read it to them.

k) Imagine that you have a time machine, and move a character – or the narrator – forward or back in time. Interview the character.

l) Take an incident from today's newspaper; try to write about it as a novelist would.

m) Invent names for public figures that you and your friends are familiar with (e.g., "Mr. Charis Argant" and "Mr. Shaker Cliché", two federal politicians). Ask your friends to guess the true identity of the people.

n) Write an account of a personal exploit in the style of a camp-fire tale.

o) Form a tall-story club. The member who writes the tallest story of the week becomes Tall-Tale Teller of the Week.

p) Try to experience all the tastes or smells mentioned in a particular novel.

q) Collect words used to describe the main characters in a novel you are reading in class (e.g., meek, aggressive, intuitive, intellectual, languid, verbose); write these words on individual cards. Take four or five large sheets of paper; write the name of a character on each sheet. Shuffle the cards and deal them out to the students in your group. Each student in turn places his card on the appropriate character sheet, *giving a reason why it belongs there.* If a student's reason is challenged by more than one person, he must take back the card.

2. The Short Story

Short stories of various kinds may be readily found on a variety of topics and at varying levels of difficulty. Short stories can provide:

- enjoyment and entertainment;
- reading practice at specific levels of difficulty;
- stimulus for further reading;
- an introduction to a theme;
- examples of the genre;
- motivation for creative writing;
- opportunities for discussion and role-playing (see Listening, Speaking, and Drama section);
- understanding of techniques used to arouse interest or involve the reader emotionally;
- material for vocabulary development (new words in context).

Sample Activities for Students

a) Compose a telegram giving the essence of a short story in fifteen words; expand it into a hundred-word night letter.

b) Take a short story and make a list of the information given by the author in the first ten lines; the middle ten lines (approximate); the last ten lines.

c) Rewrite the story briefly as (i) a news report, (ii) a radio announcement, (iii) a play.

d) Give a running commentary, sports-reporter style, on the action in an adventure story.

e) List all the words that contribute to the mood of sadness in a sad story, to the mood of excitement in an adventure story, to the mood of foreboding in a mystery story. Use the words in a haiku or diamente poem.

f) Pretend to be the author of a story you have enjoyed reading. Describe (in writing) how the idea for the story evolved.

g) Pretend that you are the hero or heroine of the story. Write about what you were doing the week before the story begins – or the week after it finishes.

h) Make a list of all the new facts learned from the story.

i) Find a story on the same theme written by an author from another country.

j) Rewrite the opening of the story in the style of (i) a fairy-tale or (ii) a myth.

k) Read two or three myths from various cultures giving an account of the origin of fire, the seasons, or some other natural phenomenon. Write a modern myth explaining how the Great Lakes came to be where they are.

l) Read folk tales from various lands. (One or two publishers have these in series.) Form three groups. Each group makes up a tale about a modern hero or heroine, and tells it to the second group, which retells it to the third group. Each member of the third group then writes it out. Compare final versions with originals.

3. Poetry

Poetry is one of the most sensory of all literary modes; it should be *experienced* and *enjoyed*. At the same time, students should see it as a form of communication, a way of expressing ideas and impressions.

Students will respond naturally to imagery and rhythmic patterns of language. Once these initial responses have been recognized and explored, students can be helped to appreciate and understand the function of the more formal elements of poetry.

Questions such as the following can be used to explore the function of rhythm and imagery: How is the rhythmic pattern of this poem related to its meaning? How does each form (ballad, sonnet, haiku) achieve its particular effects and emotional impact?

Although a broad selection of poems from other times or eras should be introduced at every stage of exploration, there should be an appropriate emphasis on modern and contemporary verse.

Suggested Strategies for Teachers

a) Have students make personal anthologies (over the four years of the division) of favourite poems.

b) Use choral reading to bring a poem to life.

c) Convey your enthusiasm to the students by reading to them a short poem of personal or current interest each day.

d) Select several poems on a theme that has particular fascination for adolescents – *death*, for example.

"Poor Edward"[1] . . . . . George Johnston
"She Dwelt Among Untrodden Ways". . . . . William Wordsworth
"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" . . . . . Robert Frost
"Roman Holiday"[2] . . . . . Frank Collymore
"The Cremation of Sam McGee" . . . . . Robert Service
"When I Am Dead, My Dearest". . . . . Christina Rossetti
"Clever Tom Clinch Going to Be Hanged" . . . . . Jonathan Swift
"Requiescat". . . . . Matthew Arnold
"Requiescat". . . . . Robert Louis Stevenson
"On the Way to the Mission" . . . . . Duncan Campbell Scott
"As Redmen Die" . . . . . Pauline Johnston

e) Divide the class into groups. Each group chooses a theme: *day*, *night*, *sea*, *love*, etc. Students then look for poems on their theme, examining anthologies, collected poems, and other sources. They prepare a collection for class presentation. What words appear most frequently in each collection?

f) The groups choose new themes. Students list the four or five words that they would expect to encounter most often, then search for poems. Were their expectations substantiated?

g) Look at a theme as explored by Canadian poets – for example, *memories:*

"Game After Supper" . . . . . Margaret Atwood
"Memory" . . . . . David Helwig
"The Fisherman". . . . . Richard Sommer
"Charlottetown Harbour" . . . . . Milton Acorn
"Memories of Bathurst Street" . . . . . Raymond Souster
"The Cabin" . . . . . George Bowering

Then have the students search for other poems on the same theme. The poems may be translations from another language. If such a poem is found, it could be recited in the original as well as in translation. Students will be able to respond to the mood conveyed by the sound and rhythm of the original.

– Is it possible to tell what mood the poet is trying to evoke in the original? In the translation?

– Write sentence fragments of recollections of happy times or sad times. Take the fragments and experiment with poetic structure.

1. John Robert Colombo, *How Do I Love Thee?* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1970).
2. Donald G. Wilson, *New Ships: An Anthology of West Indian Poems for Secondary Schools* (Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 1975).

h) Take a universal theme such as *war*. Explore contemporary and traditional ballads on this theme (in print and recorded). Take a known incident from wartime or an incident reported in the newspaper and have the students compose, as a group or as a class, a ballad on that incident.

i) Encourage more mature students to approach a poem directly, focusing on imagery and rhythm. Specific comparisons are often fruitful; for instance, students could examine three poems using the same image:

"Icarus" . . . . . Stephen Spender
"Icarus" . . . . . Irving Layton
"I, Icarus" . . . . . Alden Nowlan

- How do each poem's language, images, stanza construction, and form suggest the poet's intentions?

Or, introduce Blake's "The Tiger".

- How does the poet convey a sense of fearfulness?
- What fears do you have? Can you write a poem about some of your fears, using the same rhythm as Blake?

4. Plays

The script of a play is to theatre what a musical score is to a symphony. A play becomes theatre and a score a symphony only when performed by artists before an audience.

In the classroom, the script of a play is not theatre, but a piece of literature, and must be treated as such. Its particular qualities provide an ideal vehicle for developing skills in the following areas:

- oral reading: comprehension, projection, experimentation with language;
- group interaction: decision-making, discussion skills;
- co-operation: inference, critical awareness, elaboration, extension, analogy, value clarification;
- characterization: identification of (a) the character's own words about himself, (b) words of other characters about the character (given this information, students can participate in role-playing activities to deepen comprehension and further investigate the characters);
- comprehension of text: movement, mood, atmosphere, conflict, exposition, complication, climax, resolution; further comprehension of mood, movement, and atmosphere.

The following are *some* of the scripts commonly used in the Intermediate Division:

The Sandbox (stage) . . . . . Edward Albee
Alias Mr. Pollard (television) . . . . . Leslie McFarlane
Nobody Waved Goodbye . . . . . Don Owen
Death Takes a Holiday . . . . . Walter Ferris
The Black Bonspiel of Willie McCrimmon . . . W.O. Mitchell

Using the Plays of Shakespeare

The study of plays by Shakespeare can, under certain circumstances, and with certain students, provide a valuable experience and a basis for future study.

At the same time, the language of Shakespeare can present serious problems for Intermediate Division students, a factor that necessitates careful handling of this material in the Intermediate years.

It is important, first of all, that the student be introduced to Shakespeare in a context that will encourage the development of positive attitudes. At no time should he be made to feel that he is being "force-fed" a play that is foreign in its language and irrelevant in its subject matter. The teacher's approach should be designed to minimize the problems that confront the student in listening to or reading Shakespeare's plays.

Teachers might use Lamb's *Tales* or some other summary of the story initially, to familiarize students with the setting, plot, and characters. In turning to the play itself, the emphasis should be on how the story has been made into drama – on how the playwright has adapted it for the stage. Thus, it would be wise for teachers to use selected excerpts rather than attempt to read an entire play from beginning to end. Suggested activities could include:

- introducing students ahead of time to some of the unusual forms of Elizabethan English – e.g., "Know ye not that...";
- selecting a passage and having students in pairs read aloud only those words or phrases that make sense to them (students should attempt to discover the meaning of the other phrases by discussing them in pairs);
- translating a short passage into contemporary English;
- recording an interview with a character speaking in Elizabethan English (the interview could focus on some aspect of that character's behaviour in the play – e.g., Sir Toby and his drinking problem in *Twelfth Night*);
- examining other pieces of literature that deal with the same theme;
- rewriting short scenes in colloquial English to share with the rest of the class;
- selecting an issue or character from the play and writing an article to show the bias that might be taken in treating this subject by such publications as *Maclean's, Sports Illustrated, Chatelaine, National Geographic, True Romances, Field and Stream, Tiger Beat*, etc.;
- arranging a trip to Stratford to attend a production of the play being studied.

Note: Students could deal directly with the text in exploring exposition, complication, climax, and resolution, after several activities involving the use of language have been completed. It might be reasonable to begin with one of the more easily understood plays, such as *As You Like It* or *Twelfth Night*.

5. Non-Fiction

Theoretically, this category includes the formal essay, articles, biographies, autobiographies, letters, diaries, journals, and newspapers. In practice, some of these writings may more appropriately be designated fiction. One useful purpose for undertaking their study is to develop in students the ability to distinguish between fact, fiction, and fancy.

Students should be able to identify the author's or journalist's intention. Is it to inform, arouse, persuade, or describe? Other questions follow: Does he have a particular point of view? Is he convincing? What evidence does he provide in support of his point of view? Does he teach the reader anything? Can any bias be perceived?

Sample Activities for Students

Newspapers and journals can stimulate creative writing.

a) Focus attention on the three most important considerations to be taken into account in evaluating a newspaper's effectiveness: *audience*, *intention*, and *effectiveness of appeal*.

Note format in the following ways:

- Look at the front page. Discuss the devices used to attract your attention.
- Discuss the elements of a news story (who? what? which? where? why? when? how?).
- Note the headlines and heads of stories. Examine these for impact (vivid verbs, size of the type). What function do they serve?
- Where is the sports section placed in the sequence of newspaper sections? Does it appear in the same place in other newspapers? Why might the emphasis differ?
- Where does the editorial page appear in the paper? How does its appearance differ from that of, say, the sports section? What might the reason for this be? How much space is given to it? Where is the letters-to-the-editor column placed in relation to the editorial page? Can you suggest any reasons for this?
- What kinds of stories seem to be given prominence on the city page? Why? Is it the same for different newspapers? Why?
- Why do we have feature articles in a newspaper? In what ways do they seem different from articles on other pages?
- What is the appeal of photographs, cartoons, comic strips, maps? What is their function or usefulness?
- What devices are used in advertisements to attract your attention and arouse your interest? Is there anything else in the newspaper that is like an advertisement? In what ways? Take an advertisement and try to convert it into a verse. Does it work? If yes, why?

b) Write letters to the editor on a question such as: Should the age at which a driving licence may be issued be lowered (or raised)?

c) Take an experience reported in the paper. Rewrite it as a short story, a limerick, or a haiku.

d) Take any report on a political figure. Remove all the judgemental words. How many were there? Of what kind? Determine which political party the newspaper supports.

e) i) Read carefully one example of each of the following:
- a major news item
- an editorial
- a review or commentary bearing a by-line.

ii) Which of the three selections:
- presents the greatest number of facts?
- contains the greatest number of opinions?
- contains the greatest number of action words?
- contains the greatest number of adjectives?
- makes the greatest number of assumptions about the reader's knowledge?
- makes the greatest number of assumptions about the reader's interests?
- would be least affected by having the last two paragraphs removed?
- would be most likely to stimulate controversy?
- could be most easily summarized in one or two sentences?
- draws upon the most evidence to support a point of view?
- gives the greatest indication of the writer's emotions?
- required the most research (as far as it is possible to tell)?

iii) What seems to be the single most important purpose served by each of the three selections?

iv) Which of the following adjectives could be used to describe the articles read?

impartial	terse	explicit
reflective	conversational	appreciative
logical	sarcastic	informative
descriptive	convincing	dramatic
philosophic	impersonal	anecdotal
analytical	critical	formal
persuasive	precise	enthusiastic
humorous	climactic	detailed

v) Take a recent experience and write about it in the manner and from the perspective of: (a) a news item, (b) an editorial, (c) a personal commentary.

6. Film and Television

Film and television can be considered visual literature. As such, they are a prominent influence on young people. This aspect of films and television should be explored, with particular attention to values and lifestyles. Students should be encouraged to interpret, criticize, and evaluate the programs and films they see. The visually literate person should be both discriminating and selective, and be able to analyse simple video and film techniques.

Sample Activities

a) Have the students view a short film (6-8 minutes). Play the film through twice without its soundtrack. After viewing the film for the second time, the students (in pairs) discuss what they feel the film said. Then they write ten sentences that could be used at appropriate points to reinforce what is being said in the film visually. This exercise develops the students' analytical abilities, encourages the growth of ideas, and teaches students the importance of concise, accurate language.

b) Cut comic strips (taken from a newspaper) into their individual frames. Arrange the frames of each strip in random order and add a few frames from another strip. The student's task is to arrange the frames into a coherent order.

This exercise makes the student aware of the structure of a film and the process of editing. The student must use the dialogue *and* the visual elements of the comic strip as clues in assembling the strip.

c) Videotape one or two food commercials. Show them to the students; ask them to answer such questions as: What audience is the commercial aiming to attract? Who is expected to buy? What human frailty is being exploited? What words are used most often? For homework, students could analyse a commercial for a cleanser or deodorant, then attempt to answer another relevant question: At what level of language usage do commercials operate?

d) Group students in threes. Ask them to invent a product, plan an advertising campaign, and prepare the commercials. They should use the approaches and methods identified in (c) – key words, target buyers, etc.

e) Have students audiotape news broadcasts, sports broadcasts, science programs. They should then compare and analyse the language usage levels and techniques used to create various effects (sense of urgency and excitement, impartiality, sincerity, etc.).

7. The Thematic Approach

The thematic approach, a traditional one in literature, has a number of advantages. It gives the study a sense of unity and coherence, and enables students to recognize and compare authors' or poets' treatments. All the points made on pages 1-8 with regard to literature in general are applicable to a thematic approach.

Sample Units

1. *Nonsense*

"Jabberwocky" (poem) . . . . . Lewis Carroll
"The Owl and the Pussy Cat" (poem) . . . . . Edward Lear
"The Calf Is Born With Prospects Grim" } poems[3] . . . Ogden Nash
"Goose Population Gains High Level" }
"Prindella and the Cince" . . . . . Author unknown

Students can write a short fable on a topic of their choice, using nonsense language. They can make up their own or use that of "Prindella and the Cince":

Here indeed is a story that will make your cresh fleep. It will give you poose gimples. Think of a poor glip of a surl, prery vitty, who, just because she had two sisty uglers had to flop the more, clinkal the shavers out of the stitchen kove, and do all the other chasty norse, while her sugly isters whent to brancy fess drawls. Now wasn't that a shirty dame?...

3. Ogden Nash, *The Old Dog Barks Backward* (Boston: Little Brown, 1972). One of the sections of the poem "Earthly Creatures" begins with the line "The calf is born with prospects grim".

When using nonsense language, they should keep to standard endings – *s* for noun plurals, *-ed* or *-ing* for verb endings, etc. This activity helps students recognize structural elements in the language.

2. *Adolescence*

Diary of Anne Frank . . . . . Anne Frank
"When a Boy's a Man" (short story) . . . . . Will A. Bird
"The Modern Man" (poem) . . . . . Basil McFarlane
The Walkabout (film) . . . . . Bellevue Fox

Stories and poems about adolescence can help students gain valuable insights into their problems. (The teacher should make sure that the stories chosen deal with the theme in *sufficient depth*.)

3. *Prejudice*

"Death of a Hired Man" (poem) . . . . . Robert Frost
"The Haying" (short story) . . . . . Douglas Spettigue
I Once Knew An Indian Woman (novel) . . . . Ebbitt Cutler
"The Other Foot" (short story) . . . . . Ray Bradbury
"Summer Shower"
"Looking at Old Photographs" } poems . . . Raymond Souster
"Justice" (poem)[4] . . . . . J.W. Sullivan
"Holy" (poem)[5] . . . . . George Campbell

The selection "Justice" might be used first; it could lead to a discussion of the word *prejudice* and its roots. "The Other Foot" approaches the theme from a different point of view. "Holy" should be used last.

4. *Unsolved mysteries*

"The Mary Celeste Mystery" (short prose) . . Rupert T. Gould
"Flannan Isle" (poem) . . . . . Wilfred Gibson
"The Listeners" (poem) . . . . . Walter de la Mare
"The Monkey's Paw" (short story and play) . W.W. Jacobs
"The Timeless Island" (short story) . . . . . H.R. Percy
Lost Horizon (novel) . . . . . James Hilton

These works can stimulate creative writing in several areas. For example, some students may wish to write solutions to the unsolved mysteries about which they have read; others may wish to write their own mystery stories; others will enjoy creating riddles.

5. *"Hot and cold"*

Drought (novel) . . . . . Andrew Salkey
Two Against the North (novel) . . . . . Farley Mowat
The Cloud With the Silver Lining (novel) . . . C. Everard Palmer
The Curse of the Viking Grave (novel) . . . . . Farley Mowat
"The Cremation of Sam McGee" (poem) . . . . Robert Service
"Buffalo Buried Under Snow and Crime" (newspaper headline)

Students can discuss the effects of extreme cold or heat on the lives of rural or isolated people who lack amenities such as electricity or water. They could go on to discuss the development of resources, especially those surrounded by controversy (e.g., oil). This theme leads naturally to a variety of topics and sources (experience, projection, fantasy).

4. Ontario Department of Education, *Dimensions in Education*, February 1968.
5. Wilson, *New Ships*, p. 69.

Listening, Speaking, and Drama

Introduction

The student develops a positive self-concept through interaction with other students and the experience of success within this framework. The achievement of a positive self-concept, realized through repeated success in a variety of activities, leads to self-confidence. Once the student has achieved self-confidence, he is ready to tackle basic oral skills. Listening, speaking, and drama, properly understood and taught, lead to comprehension in reading and confidence in oral communication. They will also provide the student with the means to explore, in a variety of models, a wide range of relationships, attitudes, ideas, and emotions.

It is for these reasons that listening, speaking, and drama should not be associated with performance until the final year of the Intermediate Division. (Audience orientation is inhibiting for the shy student and tends to spotlight the wrong kind of social interaction for the hyperactive student.) All three are modes of experiential learning that operate within both the cognitive and affective areas of comprehension. They may be used either by themselves or as part of a spontaneous teaching situation.

Experiential learning can be fostered through the following activities:

- exploring an issue in a story through group decision-making and problem-solving;
- elaborating on a specific situation;
- inventing analogous situations;
- extending through dramatic metaphor;
- exploring characters in role;
- reviewing a situation or issue for deeper understanding;
- exploring the speaker's motivation through dialogue;
- willingly suspending disbelief in dramatic situations.

Each student is unique; experience is, therefore, developed at varying rates and students will not be at the same level of experience at the same time, even in the same class. However, there are some general steps in progression that are observable and valid for all students.

The *first* step in progression is the development of self-confidence and the releasing of inhibitions. To this effect, the student should be allowed to experience the maximum physical freedom possible within the limitations of the classroom. The student should be given the opportunity to experience various forms of grouping; he should be given opportunities to work in pairs, to take part in small-group activities, and to participate in activities undertaken as a class.

The *second* step is the growth of the skill of concentration. This can be fostered through activities in which concentration is an essential ingredient. This step is of the greatest importance: the ability to concentrate for sustained periods opens a doorway to the most creative and fulfilling areas of activity.

Once the capacity for sustained concentration has been developed, students are ready for the *third* step, the beginning of role-taking. This requires an increasing degree of involvement on the part of students; they must be prepared to "suspend disbelief" and enter into the reality of the situations and characters they are exploring. Their willingness to believe in the situations and characters of drama opens the door to the

exploration of attitudes, ideas, and emotions, and extends their experience.

A growing understanding of self and others leads to the *fourth* step, which is characterized by the student's growing ability to develop believable roles and relationships within the activities.

While these four steps are sequential, students will often be working on two or more levels simultaneously. Gradually, the student will acquire the experience, awareness, and understanding required to explore, understand, and participate in the range of relationships and situations that he is likely to encounter in his study of drama. With such heightened awareness, the student will be more fully motivated to become articulate and expressive in his speech and his writing.

Such awareness and motivation on the part of the student leads to:

- a readiness to believe in the situations and characters of drama;
- skill in decision-making and problem-solving;
- a willingness to challenge his own abilities;
- the ability to take on a functional identity in a group;
- a willingness to work independently to improve his communication skills;
- a willingness to co-operate with other students in discussions and presentations;
- a willingness to assume personal responsibility for his actions.

The best listening, speaking, and drama courses will draw on many forms of literature, the media, and even music. They will include a variety of forms of group dynamics, ranging from conversation to group discussion and role-playing. Such courses will reflect the multicultural character of Canadian life, will find ways of stressing the many-faceted contributions of various ethnic groups, and will contribute to cross-cultural understanding.

The following outline includes the basic elements of speaking and drama, and is developed in terms of the student's growing ability, as he matures and gains experience and skill through continuing classroom activities, to handle various forms of oral expression.

Basic Elements

Dramatic activities (specifically role-playing or improvisation) play an essential role in the development of listening and speaking skills in the language arts program. The following sequence of skills applies to all students.

1. By participating in concentrated small-group discussions, enacting drama, and developing improvisations, students develop the ability to attend closely to the words of others and to follow meaning sequences.
2. Once the student has developed the ability to attend to the words of others, he will develop the desire and skills necessary for recall. Recall forms an essential part of the process of enacting drama. It is almost always selective and inevitably leads to the skill of summarizing.
3. Dramatization elaborates the text and is thus an appropriate vehicle for developing the skill of drawing inferences and conclusions – the skill of reading between the lines. Dramatizing a text requires students to make inferences about characters, their feelings and relationships, and to rely on these inferences in determining position, expressions, movements, etc.

4. Interpretation is the final step in this sequence; it requires students to put inferences together, with attention to tone, focus, and emphasis – e.g., Readers' Theatre, pages 101 and 104.

Listening

1. By actively listening to models, students are encouraged to *develop awareness and perception of levels of language and extended meanings.* Only with this awareness can the student develop the skills involved in adapting speech to audience and situation, and enhance his ability to experiment with oral language.
2. Students should *develop the ability to concentrate* on what is being said to them to the point where they are able to listen with perception and understanding and play an *active* part in the communication process.
3. Students should *develop the ability to listen for information;* that is, they should learn to follow instruction and they must learn specific comprehension skills: listening for the main idea, supporting details, sequence, relationship of ideas, and organization.
4. In order to interpret, evaluate, and integrate the listening experience students must *develop the ability to listen critically and appreciatively.*

Speaking

1. Students should develop *a variety of speaking skills* that enable them to adapt their speech to the requirements of the audience and the situation.
2. Students should be provided with *language models* – in literature, in the media, in the classroom (i.e., through interaction with the teacher and other students).
3. Students should be given opportunities *to experiment with oral language* (e.g., choral speaking); such activities will allow them to build language resources.
4. Speech is an integral part of the communication process, and students should be made aware of its value in practical situations, e.g., discussion, speech-making.
5. Students should grow in understanding of all three functions of speech: (a) for oneself (autobiography or fiction); (b) for others (role-playing); (c) to others (making speeches, debating, etc.).

> A good class discussion is more than casual talk. It deals with a subject within the range of the pupils' experience. It has a definite purpose which they accept as worthwhile for the group. It follows the accepted rules of courtesy and orderly procedure. It takes place in a setting which encourages all pupils to contribute to the common purpose with the confidence that relevant facts and sincere opinions will be respected although they may be refuted. A good discussion aims at bringing out evidence which provides a basis for making decisions or taking action, but it will be successful if the pupils deepen their understanding of the subject by exchanging their ideas. The teacher's part is that of a senior partner who leads the pupils to evaluate their own efforts and who has the responsibility of ensuring that the discussion has an evident pattern and a definite goal.
>
> – *Outlines of Courses for Experimental Use, Intermediate Division, Curriculum I:1, 1951.*

Instructional Strategies

1. Reading Aloud

The process of reading aloud allows the student to use the written form to discover new dimensions of oral language. In this process, the reader must adapt the written form to the requirements of the oral mode. Since it is the reader's function to communicate orally what is written, speaking and listening skills, as well as reading skills, must be considered. If students are expected to read aloud, they must be provided regularly with a model (the teacher) and permitted to rehearse their reading.

Great care must be taken to make reading aloud as enjoyable and as painless an experience for students as possible. At no time should the student be made to feel that he is being asked to perform or display his lack of skill. However, the activity should not be avoided, whatever the difficulties; this would deny students the opportunity to experiment with words and to communicate with others through reading – in reading aloud and in listening to others read.

Teachers must, therefore, provide students with opportunities to read aloud in non-threatening situations. This objective can be accomplished by: (i) selecting material that is suited to the interest level and reading level of the students; (ii) giving students an opportunity to read the material and practise reading it before reading aloud; (iii) having students work in small groups; and (iv) avoiding praise or negative criticism in discussing the effectiveness of the reading.

The use of "buzz groups" will provide situations that are uninhibiting for most students. Here a small group of students work together, using a short story or poem. The students may take turns, read in unison, or use some other method whereby each student is in turn reader or audience.

A next step might be "sequential" reading. A student or group of students reads the first part of a story, a second group reads the next part, then a third group takes over, and so on. The whole story is read in sequences and the entire class participates.

When a group is not reading, it should be listening attentively. This is very important, as the attitude of the listening group is crucial to the success of the exercise. When they listen for meaning, they are not "watching a performance" but concentrating on following a story. In this situation, the student is reading aloud in the comfort of a small group, has been given an opportunity to read the material and to practise reading it beforehand, and is not feeling as if he were putting on a performance.

2. Choral Reading

Most children enjoy reading aloud in unison, as a chorus. This activity allows readers who are not as fluent as the others to feel relaxed, and consequently to be more venturesome. The better readers can help the less able to attempt words that they might avoid when reading alone.

Teachers should carefully select material that lends itself to this type of reading. Poems with a strong rhythm help teach phrasing and rhythm. Some poems or passages may offer opportunities for solo or small group parts in addition to unison reading.

Dialogue pieces or words that need emphasis can be spoken in a variety of ways.

The children should have the opportunity to experiment with vocal expression and to explore its potential to convey a wide variety of meanings. Soup labels, instruction manuals, rules and regulations, newspaper advertisements, etc., can be used to add enjoyment and variety to the experiments.

3. Readers' Theatre

"Readers' theatre" is a sophisticated form of choral reading. It provides an opportunity for students to interpret the meaning of a selection of literature, then lift the words from the printed page and read them aloud to communicate that meaning. Readers must consider focus, voice intonation, and emphasis in reading aloud. By sharing their work, students get practice in intensive listening.

4. Improvisation

Improvisation is a form of shared response to literature, involving stimulation, discovery, and creativity in the oral mode. Improvisation can take the form of spontaneous dramatization – a natural extension of one's response to literature which is communicated spontaneously in natural language. Improvisation is expression, not imitation; imitation is static and even stultifying.

a) Finding sources for improvisation
A poem, a short story, or an excerpt from a novel or film – in fact, any piece of literature that is appropriate to the level of the students – can be used as a source for improvisation. It is the function of the source to provide stimulus, structure, and direction for the expressive activity that is to follow. The source may be introduced in a number of ways (teacher reading to the students, students reading out loud, students reading silently, buzz group reading, sequential reading, choral speaking, readers' theatre). The source is only a stimulus; the content of the improvisation consists of what the students bring to the source in experience and spontaneous, natural language.

b) Retelling the source
After students have been introduced to the source they should retell the story in their own words. Not only does such an exercise focus on comprehension and recall, but it also gives students an opportunity to emphasize what to them are the most important and striking points of the source in spontaneous, natural, everyday language. After the retelling has taken place, it is important that the teacher permit the students to take another look at the source to check facts, find out what has been left out, and to possibly discover new meaning. Discussion is necessary at this point in order to summarize and tie together the information.

c) Dramatizing the source
This is a process of exploration. Any of the following approaches may be used, alone or in combination.

i) *Role-playing* gives students the opportunity to:
- deepen their understanding;
- explore problems of human conflict that need to be played out in order to be resolved;
- make clear and logical judgements about what is happening in the source and why;
- select situations, themes, concepts, and conflicts that they wish to pursue.

ii) *Monologues:* Interior and exterior monologues require the student to isolate and follow through specific ideas gleaned from the source and its initial exploration. The ideas should be consolidated on paper and at least a rough draft prepared before the student attempts to communicate the ideas orally, in role. The student should be extremely familiar with the written work as, for the role to be effective (meaningful), he must internalize language patterns, thought patterns, and vocabulary. It should be noted that the writing phase of the process is not always necessary, particularly if the students have developed role-playing skills.

iii) *Dialogue:* Dialogue has two possible functions. On the one hand, it is really formal role-playing, and can be used for an oral activity; on the other, it can be extended to a writing activity, specifically script-writing.

5. Analogy and Extension

The insights and perceptions that students gain through the explorations in role-playing, monologue, and dialogue will be tempered by their background and experience. This source must be tapped in order to expand or extend the initial source. Both analogy and extension require that more literature be explored if connections are to be made and understanding deepened. Analogy is not necessarily thematic; forms can also be analogous (e.g., after having developed their own monologues, students can look at monologues written by others). Extension is a dramatic activity that takes place in conjunction with role-playing, monologue, and dialogue when the teacher:

a) gives a role or roles to listeners;
b) changes the time;
c) changes the place;
d) changes the attitude.

6. Script-Writing

Script-writing can be a useful and enjoyable activity in the English program. Besides the usual approaches taken, such as having students create a script for a short play, a radio program, or an imaginary interview, teachers should consider using source material as inspiration for script-writing.

The teacher selects an excerpt from a story, a poem, or an article that allows students to make inferences about outcome or action implied "between the lines".

After students read the selection they can role-play the characters to discover different points of view. Once they have developed an understanding of the motivation of the characters involved, they can begin scripting.

Initially, the students (working in small groups) focus on a problem identified in the source or discovered by inference.

They re-enact the problem in role play, using dialogue only. Repetition of this exercise will allow students to clarify points of view, provide a clear sequence, and satisfy their own demands for quality.

When they reach the point where the dialogue is fairly polished, students can proceed confidently without having to stop and lose the spontaneity.

If the reading has been taped, students can listen to the tape and transcribe their dialogue in script form, inserting necessary directions for voice.

At this point, students can test their script-writing skills by exchanging scripts with other groups. As an additional challenge, the scripts can be interpreted through movement as well as voice.

This experience can provide students with a variety of opportunities for discussion, decision-making, listening, reading, writing, and improvisation in developing quality scripts.

7. **Other Outcomes**

It is interesting to note that one of the objectives of this section of the guideline is to heighten critical awareness. Speaking and drama are excellent vehicles for developing a concern in the students for the format and mechanics of communication (including grammar, spelling, diction, and pronunciation).

Sample Units

1. *Teacher reading to students for information and models*

The source is short; contains simple dialogue, obvious conflict, folk talk; lends itself to illustration. Following the reading students demonstrate final image by either drawing a picture or making a tableau. Teacher takes role of a publisher who either accepts or rejects the various illustrations. Discussion follows. Students then re-enact dialogue in their own words for comprehension. Re-enactment is not shared.

2. *Students reading out loud*

Source is short; contains simple dialogue, roles that are clearly defined, obvious conflict, relevant themes.

Students read the material silently. Then, working in small groups, they identify who is saying what. All groups then read the material out loud simultaneously (buzz group) or in sequence (sequential reading). Discussion should focus on the varieties of interpretation and ideas evident in the readings.

3. *Choral speaking*

Source is a short poem. Language may be exotic; words have sound possibilities (assonance, sibilants, harmony); language pattern is rhythmic.

Themes are obvious, but structure is non-linear and there is no "plot" as such.

Teacher introduces theme in preliminary discussion. Students then read poem silently. Each student selects one word or phrase in the source that sums up his feelings on the theme. Discussion should focus on individual responses.

Class is then divided into groups. The groups take turns reading words and phrases from the source, in a response-challenge format.

The poem is then reread, with each group reading a different part from the one read in the first reading.

Source is then reread, with particular attention to variety, harmony, tone, focus, and possible climax, in an attempt to produce a dynamic and interesting reading. As a follow-up, students could make collages of pictures or words (or words and pictures together) or write an editorial on the theme. Students can also use words and phrases from

the editorial to create their own poems. Writing will come more naturally as a result of involvement in the reading activity.

4. *Readers' theatre*

Source is short – an excerpt from a longer story or novel; contains dialogue, roles that are clearly defined, conflict that requires students to make inferences, and themes that are relevant.

Students read selection through silently.

In groups of about four (no more than five, no less than three), students identify who is saying what and read source out loud in buzz group.

Discussion should focus on conflicts, motivation of characters.

Students reread source, taking into consideration what has been learned from discussion.

Students enact source using own words in order to focus on conflicts and emphasis.

Teacher then questions students in role to provide background information and help students make further inferences.

Groups then select their own particular focus and emphasis and reread the source to other groups.

Discussion should focus on differences in interpretation and theme. As a follow-up, students can read the entire story or a novel that deals with similar themes.

5. *Retelling a source by acting it out*

Source can be a fable or other story that is simple in language, theme, and plot.

Students retell, in their own words, the story that they have read (or heard read).

Discussion should focus on varieties of interpretation, and comprehension skills should be evaluated. Source should then be related to relevant human behaviour, if necessary.

6. *Dramatizing* (role-playing, monologue, dialogue)

Source is short, and the vocabulary sophisticated; contains two distinct roles (may also include a number of minor roles), conflict that requires students to make inferences, and themes that are relevant.

Students, in pairs, play out a situation that highlights outstanding personality traits identified in the two main roles.

Teacher then reads the source to students.

By questioning in role, teacher expands on situations and conflict in source. Students can then develop monologues and dialogues that expand on characters and themes.

7. *Analogy and extension*

Sources relate to themes previously explored and styles of literature previously encountered.

Students read source and then participate in activities that enable them to make comparisons, relate themes to their own experience, and share ideas (e.g., conversation between characters from different sources who have had similar experiences; comparison between sources that deal with the same themes).

Teacher introduces new problems and conflicts by questioning.

Extension activities involve reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

8. *Sharing ideas (outcomes)*

   This activity focuses on the presentation of insights and perceptions gained through analogy and extension, choral speaking, and readers' theatre.

   Students are required to present their ideas to others with emphasis on communication skills inherent in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Evaluation should focus on both the skills involved in presenting information and those involved in reviewing information (e.g., dramatic presentation).

Evaluation

Students need to know that they are making progress, and thus evaluation needs to be an open process between teacher and student. Constant verbal and written exchange and the communication of expectations are essential. At all times students must be aware of challenge and be made to feel confident in attempting to meet the challenge.

The teacher must ask himself what he sees as progress in each individual. Below are some effective suggestions for activating this open, shared evaluation process.

1. Students and teachers keep a log book in which they record each day's activity.
2. Students write a personal evaluation, outlining their growth over a period of time.
3. Teacher and student have a conference to share perceptions of the student's development.
4. Teacher or student keeps a file of the student's written work so that it should be possible to determine progress over a period of time.
5. Teachers make students aware of the expectations that lie behind an activity so that students may know what to evaluate in their work.
6. Teacher can write personal memos to students concerning work in a particular activity.
7. Students can write questions for the teacher, to be answered privately or in class.
8. Teacher can provide opportunities to act responsibly by allowing students to evaluate their own achievement and that of others in group activity.
9. Teacher can keep a continuous record of students' participation by observing small groups of students and making anecdotal records.

Evaluation

Objectives

The general objectives prescribed for English in the Intermediate Division are given on pages 10-13 of the policy section. In the development of its curriculum, any board or school should interpret these general objectives in terms that are meaningful to both students and parents and that are sufficiently specific to allow for some valid measurement of performance. In this section the purposes of evaluation are explored and a number of alternative methods are examined.

One very important reason for having a clear statement of the principal objectives of a course is that such a statement serves as a guide to maintenance of the program balance. Lessons and assignments should be related to the course's objectives to ensure that a balance is maintained and the important objectives are reached in a fruitful way. For example, decisions on the methods to use, the time required, or even on whether or not to teach a particular literary work should be determined by the general objectives of the course. The teacher who, for two or three periods a week for five or six weeks, ploughs chapter by chapter, scene by scene, or question by question through a literary work has lost perspective on the objectives of the English program.

Effective evaluation of both the English program and of the student's performance (ongoing or summative) must begin with a clear statement of objectives. *If these are understood and accepted by the student*, it is likely that the evaluation will be effective and will be perceived as fair.

Purposes of Evaluation

The Student

An initial or *diagnostic* evaluation should be made of each student in order to determine his present level of competence. In this way it will be possible to provide appropriate remedial attention where necessary, to place each student in the program best suited to his needs, or to design an individual program that meets the student's special needs.

Diagnostic evaluation may be conducted informally by examining early samples of a student's work and observing the student. Objective information obtained from the previous school year (achievement test scores, the writing folder, reading accomplishments) may also be helpful.

Formal diagnostic evaluation that employs standardized tests, interviews, and so on, should normally be conducted by someone who has been specifically trained in this area. The commercial standardized group test is not intended for diagnostic purposes; its scoring of individual performance is much too imprecise to be used for diagnosis or placement.

Formative or ongoing evaluation of student progress, with generous feedback to both the student and his parents, is very important. It may be conducted through teacher-designed tests on units of work, a student's writing folder, charts and checklists, a student's self-evaluation, interviews, and so on. Every available means, whether formal or informal, should be used to inform the student of his pattern of achievement and to assist in implementing appropriate modifications of his program. This approach to evaluation encourages growth on the part of the student. A considerable amount of record-keeping may be required. However, much of this (such as the student's language or spelling problems) may be kept in the form of charts or checklists that are in part designed and maintained by the student in his writing folder as a record of progress. A number of

suggestions for the development of questionnaires, charts, checklists, and so on, are described later in this section. Other suggestions are incorporated in the sections on programs.

Summative evaluation is the periodic (end of term, end of year) total assessment of a student's achievement in relation to his peers and to the course objectives. Summative evaluation must maintain the balance among the course components of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. While summative evaluation may incorporate written examinations, criterion-referenced tests, and major assignments, it should also include a selection from those records of progress (including student self-assessment) that are incorporated in formative evaluation.

The Parent

Each of the three types of student evaluation described above will provide useful and important information for the student's parents. This information will help the teacher to solicit parent involvement in and understanding of remedial or special programs for the student; to keep parents well-informed of student progress in relation to the student's initial abilities and attitudes; to help the student progress; and to establish a sound basis for statements of achievement and recommendations regarding the student's future course selection. For these purposes, clear and simple statements of major course objectives, good records (both anecdotal and quantitative) of achievement, and an adequate sampling of the student's achievements (such as his written work) are all important.

The Teacher

Besides the specific assistance that diagnostic and formative evaluation can give the teacher in selecting or modifying program components and teaching strategies for individuals and groups, these forms of evaluation, if undertaken in co-operation with the student, can help the teacher in assessing the student's progress and in building student confidence in making a personal evaluation of strengths and needs. Formative evaluation is the principal means available to the teacher in assessing the effectiveness of particular strategies, texts, and resources: it is used to monitor *the program* as well as the students.

Summative evaluation should be employed to reassess the objectives of the program: Were they realistic? Did the program in fact achieve the balance sought? Are specific modifications indicated? Whether on the basis of a class, a grade level, or an entire school, summative evaluation may include such formal and reliable measures as standardized tests, where these are found to be suited to the program objectives. Such information may be useful in assessing the effectiveness of a program by a relatively objective standard and in suggesting improvements. Group standardized tests, however, are of very limited value in measuring *individual* student achievement.

> Although standardized tests of achievement are primarily designed to afford a comparison against national norms, they can perhaps be more useful *if the results are utilized to diagnose a program.*[1]

For a very useful table of the uses of formative, summative, and diagnostic testing, teachers are encouraged to consult B. S. Bloom, J. T. Hastings, and G. F. Madaus, *Handbook on Formative and Summative Evaluation of Student Learning* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971), pages 91-2. A more informal outline of the types and purposes of evaluation may be found in *Evaluation of Student Achievement*, pages 23-53.

1. Ministry of Education, Ontario, *Evaluation of Student Achievement, 1976*, p. 55.

The Use and Abuse of Standardized Tests in English

As noted above, most commercially available group standardized tests of English (language achievement, reading, or test batteries) are used chiefly to provide an overview of student performance in a school or system and to measure a program's effectiveness. It is wasteful and unnecessary to test every student for this purpose; a random sample will serve quite adequately. As well, sampling will reduce the undesirable and misplaced anxieties of teachers and students about the importance of such tests.

Content Validity

It is essential to verify, first of all, that the objectives determined by a standardized test's items (the specific items and the balance of items) conform to the major objectives of the English language or reading program. Many tests now being used fail to meet this elementary criterion. Therefore teachers must closely examine both the specific items of a proposed test and the test as a whole. Frequently, because of the relative simplicity of item design, tests tend to focus on rather trivial or esoteric points of usage, vocabulary or sentences divorced from context, and, under the august title "comprehension", measure very superficial fact recall. In order to obtain the score spread that a standardized test demands, some items tend to be artificially difficult or ambiguous.

Language and its conventions change, and the conventions of acceptable Canadian English have been changing quite rapidly in the past decade. Teachers must, therefore, be on their guard against items that reflect almost archaic usage and conventions that have been generally abandoned (e.g., punctuation of letters). Despite recent copyright dates on some revised tests, teachers should not assume that items have always been changed significantly from those on test forms that are now twenty or more years old.

Norms

The form in which scores are to be reported and used will be based on the norms provided (unless separate norms have been formed for the individual school system, as likely they should be). Contrary to common belief, a "standardized" test has nothing to do with "standards"; it is a test that is administered under strictly controlled conditions and is objectively scored and for which norms are available. Few commercial test norms have been based on Canadian, or more specifically, Ontario students. Furthermore, the norms of such tests may not have been recently established. Consequently, teachers and administrators must study very carefully how the norms for any test have been derived, both for individual students (if scores are used with or reported to the student) and for the system. Test results based upon inappropriate norms are doomed to misuse and misinterpretation.

If the test norms have been based on a "typical" school population, then a school with a large percentage of immigrant students, students from cultural or language minorities, or students from a lower socio-economic stratum will appear to compare unfavourably with other schools even though its program and the general rate of student development may be excellent. It is obvious that scores on such tests are not a fair reflection of the performance of students whose first language is not English. As well, language tests are especially prone to cultural bias. Thus great care must be exercised in the selection, use, and reporting of test scores for students from cultural minorities.

If a test or battery of tests in English is selected for use in a school system, teachers must be involved early in the test selection, and the test should be separately normed for the system over a period of several years. Assuming that the test *does* measure a range of important course objectives, it will be a valid and reliable measure of group performance once the norms have been properly established. Reliability – the consistency with which the test measures whatever it measures – is not sufficient for an accurate measurement of individual performance (for example, grade-equivalent scores). This difficult, but important, topic is further discussed in Appendix A.

Teachers involved in the selection and use of standardized tests in English are advised to study the very readable report of the Task Force on Measurement and Evaluation in the Study of English.[2]

The Evaluation of Writing: Student Progress, Student Achievement, and Program Effectiveness

No part of the student's performance in language receives more attention from the public than performance in writing. It is certainly the most obvious and permanent record of his achievement in language.

While the teacher wishes to provide sufficient response and feedback to the student to assist him in writing development, the teacher must avoid excessive intervention in the role of evaluator, as this can have a negative effect on the student and can also create an intolerable marking load. Intervention strategies should be largely positive, encouraging the student to explore and experiment with language.

Primary Considerations

The primary considerations for a writing program in the Intermediate Division are as follows:

1. *The student should be encouraged to write frequently.* This may be achieved in large measure outside the formal, grading writing assignments by encouraging the use of a personal journal[3] in which the student writes what he pleases, explores his self, and experiments with language and its effects, perhaps occasionally sharing something that he has written with his classmates or teacher. None of this is to be formally evaluated or even examined without the student's consent. The student may wish to include some of his most interesting efforts in his writing folder as part of his record of achievement in writing.

   The only follow-up required of the teacher here is to ensure that the student is interested in writing and that writing is becoming a habit.

   In the study of literature and other aspects of the language program the student will be expected to experiment with language, to react in writing to what he has read and seen, to imitate styles, and generally to have fun with language. Few such assignments need be formally assessed by the teacher; rather, they should simply be shared. Those the student considers most promising may be included in his writing folder.

2. *The student should be encouraged to write for real audiences about matters in which he has a genuine interest and to vary his style to suit his purpose.* The stimulus for writing may arise from various classroom

2. National Council of Teachers of English, *Common Sense and Testing in English* (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1975).

3. See "Writing", pp. 39-56.

situations. A genuine response to a student's writing can come not only from the teacher in his many roles, but also from classmates, from other students in the school (as in a newspaper project or through stories that are written to be read to junior classes), and from outside the school.

From the standpoint of evaluation, early drafts may be examined chiefly by the student himself, by a writing partner, or by classmates in writing groups. Some students prefer to revise their work totally on their own. The teacher may evaluate formally only the work that the student considers to be his finished effort. Final versions become part of the writing folder. The student should be writing in modes in which he has the greatest likelihood of success; these include narrative works (especially first person, real or imagined), explanations of processes or procedures, and informal essays expressing a point of view. The writing style and level of abstraction demanded should not be beyond the reach of young adolescents.[4]

3. *Formal evaluation by the teacher should not intrude too frequently or oppressively.* This is a delicate consideration. How much nudging, directing, and marking is too much? To what extent does evaluation stultify an interest in writing and the desire to experiment? To the extent that the student and his classmates can become first-line editors or critics, at least with respect to general reactions and to errors in spelling, grammar, and diction, the teacher's overt role is lessened.

   Simple performance charts or checklists may be designed and maintained by the student for recording points of grammar and writing mechanics; these may be kept in the writing folder as a measure of progress.

   The following is an example of such a chart.

Writing Checklist (to be included in a writing folder)

Ability Scale: 1–5 (low-high)

Criteria selected	Sept. 12	Sept. 20	Sept. 29	Oct. 6	Oct. 18
1. Sentence structure–no run-on or incomplete sentence	4	5	5	Mastery	—
2. Agreement of subject and verb	2	2	3	3	4
3. Consistency and use of correct end punctuation	2	1	3	3	5
4. Errors in spelling of common words	—	—	1	1	3

[*Add new criteria as others are mastered.*]

4. See James Moffet, *Teaching the Universe of Discourse* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968).

Teacher comments on assignments should be brief, clear, and generally positive. (If the work is sloppy or incomplete, it should be returned without being marked.) No more than two or three aspects of writing should be identified and "marked" at any one time. Symbols and criteria should be few in number and clearly explained to the student.

4. *Problems of grammar and writing conventions and mechanics, as they appear in the writing of the student, should not be ignored.* However, for the student having serious difficulties, not all problems can be dealt with at once. This is the rationale for the use of a checklist tailored to the needs of each student and of a cumulative record kept in the student's writing folder. A simple scale (three-point or five-point) for such problems as errors in subject-verb agreement or the use of the wrong verb tense will provide clear information to the student, to the teacher, and to parents about both problems and progress.

   Grammatical and writing errors should be treated in the context of the student's writing; exercises or drills should always take place in a meaningful context.

The Writing Folder

The best evidence of the student's writing progress is his writing folder, which is maintained over the year and includes both informal and formal writing assignments. The folder may be examined from time to time by the teacher or the student to determine achievements and needs and should be available for interviews with parents. A chart of student progress or a checklist of skills mastered should be included in the folder; it should be maintained chiefly by the student and reviewed from time to time in teacher-student interviews.

The writing folder is the principal means of *formative* evaluation. However, towards the end of the term or year, the student should weed out his inferior pieces of work, retaining at least five or six samples of his best work. That representation will serve as part of the *summative* evaluation of student achievement for the year, and will also serve to introduce the student and his best writing to the teacher in the following year. Over several years, the student will build up a portfolio illustrating his growth as a writer.

Criteria

Good writing may be classified in many ways. However, research studies show that, apart from highly technical or specialized forms of writing, there are about five general criteria that are actually used by most evaluators. These are organization, ideas, grammar mechanics, diction, and flavour (the individuality, colour, and originality of the writer).[5]

Obviously, these general criteria require further specification and modification in order to adapt them to writing in various modes. As elaborated and adapted, they may be rated on a three-point or five-point scale (*analytic* marking) and used as one means of evaluating a piece of student writing. The criteria selected may reflect the emphasis applied in a particular stage of the writing program; for this reason, some criteria may receive more weight than others. The use of formal criteria as a partial measure in the formal evaluation of a piece of writing increases the reliability of marking, provides useful information for the student (provided the criteria are clearly understood by the student), and acts as a basis for charting progress. Criteria may also be adapted to emphasize an individual student's needs.

5. See P. B. Diederich, *Measuring Growth in English* (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1974), chapter 2 and Appendix A.

An analytic scale may appear in the following pattern:

Ideas	1	2	3	4	5
Organization	1	2	3	4	5
Diction	1	2	3	4	5
Style	1	2	3	4	5
Usage	1	2	3	4	5

Sum of ratings: _____

The following are samples of criteria elaborated for Grade 8 students for use with a five-point scale:

1. *Diction: Choice of Imaginative and Varied Language*

   High
   - -Words and images that provide sharp and concrete pictures for the reader are frequent.
   - -Occasional experiments are made to stretch vocabulary and images to include new or unusual words or images.
   - -Trite expressions are usually eliminated.
   - -Flowery excesses – too many adjectives and adverbs piled on top of each other – are avoided.

   Medium
   - -Generally, the choice of words and images is at a more ordinary level, with some experimentation (not always successful) in vocabulary expansion or use of imagery.
   - -The student still lacks full control: some excesses or redundancy may occur as well as the occasional trite expression.

   Low
   - -Little experimentation with language exists.
   - -The student relies on trite and very generalized expression.
   - -There are occasional errors in the use of standard vocabulary.

2. *Organization: Focus and Sequence of Events in Eyewitness Accounts*

   High
   - -The focus is on essential events, and the sequence of events is well-ordered from the standpoint of the observer. Special devices such as the flashback are occasionally used.
   - -Key transition words such as "then" and "while" are used economically, but properly, to link events and observations in a coherent sequence.
   - -There is a proper time sequence throughout with no more than one or two minor slips.

   Medium
   - -While the sequence of main events is clear enough, there is some jerkiness or arbitrariness in transitions because of a lack of word bridges or inappropriate word bridges.
   - -Minor details are not always effectively subordinated to main events or main observations.
   - -There is occasional confusion in the sequence of tenses.

Low –The sequence of events has little sense of order. Important and unimportant events are mixed in almost equal proportion so that the writing lacks focus.

–Transition words and time-order words (e.g., tense of verbs) are either infrequent or misleading.

These and other criteria are elaborated in P. Evans, P. Brown, and M. Marsh, eds., *Criteria for the Evaluation of Student Writing, Grades 7 and 8: A Handbook* (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1976).

A valuable by-product of the elaboration of criteria for writing at various grade levels within a school or a school system is the more effective specification of modes of writing and of realistic objectives for the writing program.

Holistic Scoring

While the specification of criteria and the use of an analytic scale increase marking reliability and provide information concerning the student's growth as a writer, there is a more effective means of assessing the level of writing achievement across the grades and the effectiveness of a school's writing program. This method, *holistic scoring*, can also provide an annual assessment of approximately where each student stands in relation to his peers. Holistic scoring is, therefore, a method of summative evaluation.

The strategy of holistic scoring is quite simple: each student writes two compositions on separate days in modes of writing appropriate to his grade. (A restriction of the choice of topics increases the reliability of the assessment.) These pieces of writing are given an *impression* mark by at least three teachers, based upon a rapid reading with few instructions or directions concerning criteria. Any scale may be used (a ten-point scale is quite adequate).

The student's identity is unknown to all of the scorers; no information is provided about grade level, program, or school (where more than one school is involved), and no scorer knows how the compositions have been rated by others.

Scorers are instructed to use the *whole* scale: no particular score is a pass or a failing mark. The three or more scores are then summed or averaged and ranged on the normal curve (one curve for all students across the grades involved and one for each grade level).

Holistic scoring is very rapid; teachers should require no more than a minute for each composition. No comments or symbols are used, as only the impression mark is recorded. The result, surprisingly, is a highly reliable score.

A more complete description of this procedure appears in Appendix B and in the following publications: P. B. Diederich, *Measuring Growth in English* (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1974); and R. Traub; R. Wolfe; C. Wolfe; P. Evans; and H. H. Russell, *Secondary–Post-Secondary Interface Project II: Nature of Students*, vol. 2 (Toronto: Ministry of Education, Ontario, and Ministry of Colleges and Universities, Ontario, 1976).

One particular advantage of holistic scoring needs to be stressed. When the student is anonymous to the markers and the markers are not the student's teacher, the relationship between the student and his own teacher of writing changes significantly. The teacher is no longer seen as

an evaluator-examiner, but as a mentor and respondent whose principal role is perceived to be that of a *counsellor* to the student in the improvement of writing ability.

Evaluating Growth in Affective Areas and Listening and Speaking Skills

The present section is intended to draw attention to a large number of program objectives often ignored or slighted because teachers lack, or feel they lack, objective or reliable means of measurement. Though lip service is regularly paid to the importance of increased effectiveness in speaking and listening, to the necessity of improving student attitudes towards reading, writing, and literature, and to the student's development as a person (self-esteem, values, habits), little is done through evaluation to underline the presumed importance of these attitudes and abilities or to count them as part of the student's total achievement. It is more common to evaluate only those skills that can be easily measured through writing and examinations.

There are numerous sources of instruments and methods that permit useful evaluation of these "softer" areas of achievement in English. *A Guide to Evaluation*[6] is a particularly valuable resource. This booklet contains sample "attitude sorts" and "attitude scales" by which the teacher can measure class attitudes to various aspects of English and, presumably, the degree of change of attitude, a valuable means of assessing program effectiveness. Other sample questionnaires are available for probing the individual student's interests, including reading interests. Still others are "class climate" inventories through which the teacher may obtain quick information on the effectiveness of a particular teaching approach.

Evaluation strategies also include checklists and rating scales, peer evaluation, and *self-evaluation.* In this latter area more needs to be done. The student should be intensively involved in judgements concerning his needs and his successes. The interview, personal rating scales, and written self-appraisal all deserve consideration.

6. C. R. Cooper and A. C. Purves, *A Guide to Evaluation* (New York: Ginn, 1973).

The following material[7] illustrates techniques for teacher, peer, and self-evaluation of speaking and listening skills.

a) **Checklist for Teacher Evaluation of Language Skills**

Please check by encircling the number appropriate in each case.
Example: You consider a pupil just slightly better than average at a certain skill. You circle the number four, as follows:

1 2 3 (4) 5

Low *High*

1. Skill in communication

1 2 3 4 5

incompetent with all language; no awareness of listeners; speaks without trying to evoke understanding from others; halting pace of words and inflections of voice not adjusted to listeners; writes like an illiterate person

uses language in any form with power, proficiency, and pleasure; adjusts pace of words and inflection to listeners; uses an "imparting tone"; is aware of the need to make oneself understood; writes competently with a sense of style

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2. Organization, purpose, and point

1 2 3 4 5

rambles, no sense of getting to the point; rattles on without purpose; cannot tell a story or express ideas in a suitable sequence

plans what is said; has control of language; can tell a story or express ideas in a suitable sequence

7. The material given on pp. 115-19 is reprinted, by permission of the publisher, from W. Loban, *Language Development: Kindergarten Through Grade 12* (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1976).

Low	*High*
3. Wealth of ideas 1 2 3 4 5	
seldom expresses an idea; appears dull and unimaginative doesn't originate suggestions or plans	expresses ideas on many different topics; makes suggestions on what to do and how to carry out class plans; shows imagination and creativity in many ways
4. Fluency 1 2 3 4 5	
seldom talks; exceptionally quiet; needs to be prompted to talk; overly laconic	talks freely, fluently, and easily; also talks brilliantly and effectively
5. Vocabulary 1 2 3 4 5	
uses a meagre vocabulary, far below that of most pupils this age; inarticulate, mute	uses a rich variety of words; has an exceptionally large, effective, and growing vocabulary; speaks fluently with vocabulary suited to listeners
6. Quality of Listening 1 2 3 4 5	
inattentive, easily distracted; seldom attends to the spoken language of others; doesn't listen for relationships or note how main ideas control illustrations or subordinate ideas	superior attentiveness and understanding of spoken language; a creative listener

Low	*High*
7. Quality of writing 1 2 3 4 5	
lacks coherent organization; often does not follow conventional usage and spelling; a very poor writer	organizes in terms of a purpose; excludes irrelevant materials; subordinates elements not to be stressed; uses appropriate style, acceptable usage, and conventional spelling; a superior writer
8. Reading 1 2 3 4 5	
reads only what he has read; "deciphers" print rather than reads it; gets no ideas from books; will not very likely read more than newspapers and magazines (if that) when schooling is over	reads voraciously, easily, and with interest books of merit and difficulty; absorbs ideas from books easily and accurately; will undoubtedly read much throughout life
9. Activity 1 2 3 4 5	
listless, apathetic, passive; has very little to do with others; prefers to sit; has low energy level; has slow reactions; seems always tired	very active; relates easily and freely to others; has a high energy level; enjoys physical activity; has quick reactions; seems exceptionally vital and alive
10. Acceptance or rejection 1 2 3 4 5	
rejected by others, disliked; almost never chosen by others or included in activities; almost entirely isolated	notably popular with everyone; others seek his or her company; never lacks companionship; always included in peer-group activities

b) **Peer Evaluation of an Oral Presentation**

	Score
1. Was the speaker enthusiastic?	_____
2. Did he/she reveal a good grasp of the subject?	_____
3. Did his/her talk have a plan?	_____
4. Was there warmth in his/her communication with the audience?	_____
5. Did he/she have a sense of humour?	_____
6. Was your attention consistently held?	_____
7. Were you disappointed when the speaker ended?	_____
8. Did you find the presentation informative?	_____

Ratings: 5 – excellent

4 – very good

3 – good

2 – adequate

1 – poor

c) **Self-Evaluation of Listening**

Student Checklist for Listening Attitudes and Habits	*Yes*	*No*
1. When I have to listen to a speaker, a recording, a reading, or to others in my class:		
a) I squirm around a lot.		
b) I interrupt when I disagree.		
c) I get turned off if the voice seems different or strange to me.		
2. Generally:		
a) I just find listening a bore.		
b) I would rather talk than listen.		
c) I realize that I could learn more by listening than by speaking.		
3. If I find the speaker uninteresting:		
a) I shuffle my feet.		
b) I clear my throat.		
c) I tap my fingers.		
d) I cough.		
e) I stare at the ceiling.		
f) I fake interest.		
g) I just can't wait to leave.		
h) I talk to my neighbour.		
4. If I find the speaker interesting, I comment to my neighbour.		

Note: This checklist may be used initially as a test for sensitivity (Yes – No answers), to be followed by discussion. Students could then compile a list of more positively framed questions for self-evaluation. This questionnaire may be used periodically for student self-evaluation of progress. The following checklist is a suitable measuring device for a subsequent evaluation of listening skills.

1. I have not tried to improve.		
2. I have tried to improve with no success.		
3. I have tried with some success.		
4. I have been successful.		

Further suggestions for the evaluation of speaking and listening skills are included in the following: A. H. Gromman, ed., *Reviews of Selected Published Tests in English* (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1976); W. Loban, *Language Development: Kindergarten Through Grade 12* (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1976); W. D. Brooks and C. W. Friedrich, *Teaching Speech Communication in the Secondary School* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973); and W. T. Petty, *Research in Oral Language* (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1976).

The Evaluation of Performance in Literature and Reading

As will be evident from the guideline in general and the sections on reading and literature in particular, the principal objectives in the teaching of literature concern the development of attitudes, habits, aesthetic awareness, and a response to literature. Literature, as suggested in the section "Listening, Speaking, and Drama", should be the stimulus for a wide variety of language activities. The integration of literature into the total language program should be achieved through the student's oral and written responses to what he reads—reports, discussions, written reactions, imitations.

In the recent past, literature has tended to swallow up the language program, and tests, examinations, and formal assignments in literature have formed too large a proportion of the means of measuring achievement in the English program. Frequently, such literature tests consist of questions relying on factual recall, on identification of the characteristics of literary genres, figures of speech, and critical nomenclature in general, or on interpretation on a very low level; for example:

> Define "suspense". Describe three example of suspense from . . .
>
> Identify five characteristics of the ballad and illustrate each from . . .
>
> State the speaker, the person spoken to, and the context for five of the following quotations from . . .

This pattern likely results from the general failure to state objectives clearly for students in the Intermediate Division, together with a sense of insecurity about less "objective" measurements of response, which most teachers would nevertheless consider very important.

Studies of adolescent reading indicate that the development of reading as a habit reaches its "make or break" point for most young people in the years embraced by the Intermediate Division. At this stage discrimination in reading begins to develop. This is the age, then, when indulgence *in* literature is far more important than knowledge *about* literature; much of the concern about literary terms and literary classification is misplaced. Thus, the development of a positive student *attitude* and *response* should be a central aim of the reading and literature program in the Intermediate Division. And not all response, what B. C. Diltz called "a sense of wonder", need necessarily be articulated and defined. It will find expression in the way in which the student internalizes, reacts to, and builds upon what he has read.

This section, therefore, suggests a number of ways to measure student achievement in reading and literature and to assess program effectiveness, laying particular stress on attitude and response as opposed to knowledge about literature. Some of the suggestions are rather loosely structured; others are more strictly structured and precise, including multiple-choice alternatives and open-ended responses. All are valid.

A Guide to Evaluation,[8] cited earlier in this document, is an excellent resource for questionnaires on attitudes to reading and literature and reading habits. Teachers will also find the following sources helpful in assessing student response to literature: Allan Purves, *How Porcupines Make Love* (New York: Ginn, 1972), and James Squire, ed., *Response to Literature* (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1968).

8. C. R. Cooper and A. C. Purves, *A Guide to Evaluation.*

Examination-question techniques that lift questions above the level of factual recall and the formulation of superficial judgements and classifications are presented in several publications. One of the best is *12,000 Students and Their English Teachers* (College Entrance Examination Board, Commission on English, 1968), available from the National Council of Teachers of English. This handbook includes teaching approaches and sample questions and answers (with evaluative comments) for a wide range of literary genres for Grades 9 to 12.

The following outline for levels of teaching and testing from E. J. Gordon's "Levels of Teaching and Testing"[9] should be helpful to teachers in designing and analysing examinations in literature:

a) to remember a fact
b) to prove a generalization that someone else has made
c) to make one's own generalization
d) to generalize from the book to its application in life
e) to carry over the generalization into one's own behaviour.

It would be helpful for teachers to design a simple grid of important objectives before designing tests and examinations. Such a grid and the means for utilizing it may be found in Cooper and Purves, *A Guide to Evaluation*, as well as in the various multiple-choice pre- and post-tests in their Responding series. Whereas multiple-choice tests are generally to be avoided[10] because they tend to emphasize rather superficial and trivial information, Cooper and Purves have met with some success in designing multiple-choice criterion-referenced tests that go beyond superficialities and that are tied to the grid of objectives.

As with literature, perhaps the most important objectives for reading in general in the Intermediate Division are concerned with the affective domain – enjoyment, the habit of more and better reading, responding, and valuing. Probably the most important "practical" objective is comprehension, a principle that is often not taken far enough. Comprehension encompasses more than the ability to identify a main idea and supporting details, though many standardized tests of reading fail to go beyond this.

In the second round of the National Assessment of Reading in the United States, the inquiry team made an outline of a number of sub-objectives under "comprehension", which is very useful to teachers. The following is a brief sampling:

a) Use the connotation of a word as an aid to comprehension.
   Examples:
   Distinguish between the emotional or affective meaning of a word and its explicit or denotative meaning.
   Indicate how the selection of a word for its connotation affects meaning.

b) Identify the underlying assumptions of the writer.
   Examples:
   Explain the beliefs that the writer used as a basis for attacking a problem.
   Recognize the assumptions on which statements and claims are based.

9. E. J. Gordon, "Levels of Teaching and Testing", *English Journal*, September 1955. Quoted in M. W. Tompkins, "Testing in English Literature: Toward a General Rationale", *McGill Journal of Education*, Spring 1968.

10. B. H. Choppin and A. C. Purves, "A Comparison of Open-Ended and Multiple-Choice Items Dealing with Literary Understanding", *Research in the Teaching of English*, Spring 1969.

c) Relate what is read to reality.
Example:
Distinguish between fact and opinion.

d) Compare what is read to personal experiences.
Examples:
Assess relevance of given reading material to their own lives and/or the lives of others.
Cite an instance from their own experience relating material they have read to their own life and/or the lives of others.

Such objectives, restated by teachers to serve their programs and students, should prove to be an effective guide to better test design.

Evaluation: Selected Bibliography

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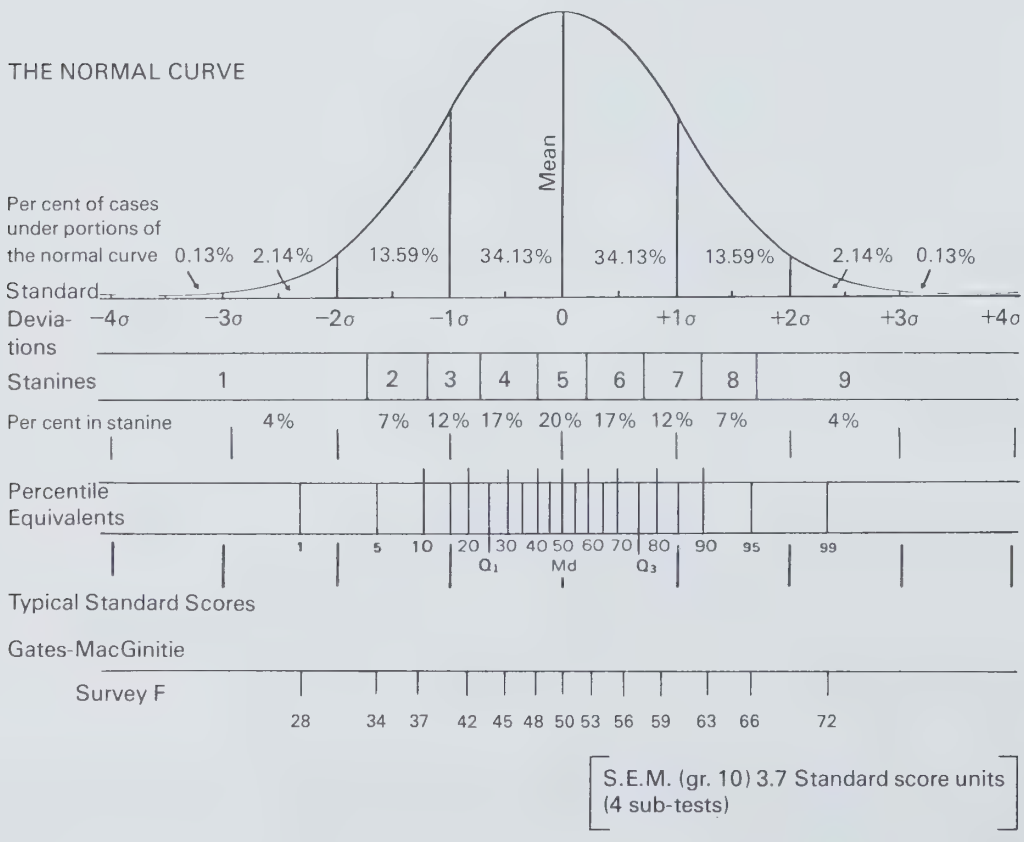
Appendix A: Precision of Measurement and the Use of Standardized Test Scores

Reliability is defined as the degree of consistency with which a test measures whatever it measures. Teacher-made tests and essay-scoring are notorious for their lack of reliability. On the other hand, standardized tests are generally highly reliable where group performance is measured. Consequently, mean scores for a *group* of class size or larger can be treated with confidence.

This same confidence cannot be extended, however, to individual test scores. Beside day-to-day inconsistencies in performance due to such factors as health, mood, response to testing situations, and willingness to take risks, there is a statistical error of measurement in any test. Most test technical manuals give this information as the standard error of measurement, an estimate of the confidence with which one may treat an individual test score. Responsible test publishers clearly identify this factor and recommend that individual scores *not* be recorded or reported in exact percentile equivalents or so-called "grade-level equivalents". Less responsible publishers tacitly encourage such a translation of individual scores, implying a precision which these scores simply do not have. Because of the nature of the standard curve, this information is most misleading in the middle of the range, where the majority of students' scores fall.

Percentile bands, based on the standard error of measurement, or *stanines* (nine intervals, of which all but the first and last are equal) are recommended as the most honest forms in which scores should be reported to students and maintained as records (see Figure 1).


THE NORMAL CURVE
Mean
Per cent of cases under portions of the normal curve
0.13% 2.14% 13.59% 34.13% 34.13% 13.59% 2.14% 0.13%
Standard Deviations
−4σ −3σ −2σ −1σ 0 +1σ +2σ +3σ +4σ
Stanines
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Per cent in stanine
4% 7% 12% 17% 20% 17% 12% 7% 4%
Percentile Equivalents
1 5 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 95 99
Q1 Md Q3
Typical Standard Scores
Gates-MacGinitie
Survey F
28 34 37 42 45 48 50 53 56 59 63 66 72
S.E.M. (gr. 10) 3.7 Standard score units (4 sub-tests)

It follows that "pre-test/post-test" measurement of *individual* student achievement by a standardized test (as for a measure of progress in a remedial reading program) is a wholly inappropriate use of a standardized test. Furthermore, the error of measurement is compounded in the two administrations of the test.

In sum, the use of a standardized test, even when carefully selected with reference to course objectives, is open to considerable abuse by those unaware of the test's statistical properties. The illusion of precision conveyed by percentile ranks or grade-level equivalent scores misrepresents the individual's actual achievement level.

The following publications deserve careful attention from those responsible for selecting tests:

W.T. Fagan, C.R. Cooper, and J.M. Jensen, *Measures for Research and Evaluation in the English Language Arts* (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1975). A large number of tests of language development, listening, literature, reading, and writing are reviewed.

R.B. Ruddell, ed., *Accountability and Reading Instruction* (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1973).

Roger Farr, *Reading: What Can Be Measured?* (Newark, Del.: International Reading Association, 1969).

Appendix B: "Holistic" or "Rapid Impression" Scoring of Essays

Essay-marking is generally considered a very unreliable process. Would one teacher's "76" be the same or mean the same as another teacher's? Would two teachers assessing the same essay likely give it almost the same mark? Or, for that matter, would the same teacher on two separate occasions give the same essay the same mark?

Add to this the factors of choice of topic and student variables. Is any single piece of writing representative of the student's writing ability? Would the effectiveness with which he wrote a particular composition today resemble closely his effectiveness if he had written it two weeks ago when he was in a different mood? And how might the student have responded if the mode and topic had been different?

All of these factors are at work when one attempts to obtain a reasonably precise evaluation of the writing ability of the individual student or of the general pattern of writing ability across a class, grade, or number of grades.

While a more detailed analysis of writing assignments against specified criteria is important in the marking of compositions over the term, this analytic approach provides little assistance in achieving increased reliability when student performance is to be assessed in a summative evaluation. This reliability or consistency is best achieved by rapid impression scoring of the composition by two, three, or more markers, each of whom reads the composition rapidly and assigns an impression mark on any scale desired (such as a ten-point scale). The impression scores are then averaged.

Scorers are given minimal instructions; they are told to read each composition rapidly and to assign it a score. They are to use every point on the scale, though they are not required to distribute the essays evenly or otherwise.

Because the individual's writing performance varies greatly due to circumstances, motivation, mode, and topic, it is desirable to use *two* writing assignments per student – each in a different mode and assigned on a different day. Obviously, the modes assigned should be two that have been given particular stress at the student's grade level.

Students should not be identified; the scorers should not know who the student is or anything about him. Scorers should work independently so that no one else's score for the composition is known.

To reduce the unreliability caused by differences between scorers, a small number of compositions should be "buried" for scoring by all and the results here used to evaluate the scorers.

An increase in the number of scorings increases reliability. The recent Interface Study referred to earlier showed that the reliability for a *single* composition using different numbers of scorers was as follows: one scorer, .52; two scorers, .68; three scorers, .76; four scorers, .81. Where two compositions are provided by each student, reliability should increase considerably.

The amount of reliability necessary depends on the purpose of the evaluation. If the purpose is to measure a student's performance in writing (not recommended), high reliability is necessary. For an evaluation of an individual student's achievement, the performance scored here should be combined with the student's performance (marked normally) on a larger sample of compositions over the term. For the evaluation of the relative performance of student groups of a class size or larger, lower reliability is quite acceptable.

In order to compare performance across several grades over a period of years, a number of compositions (scored by a large number of scorers on the first occasion) should be reburied annually in subsequent scorings. Their place on the scale in each year will give some indication of whether or not there is an *improvement* in the quality of the writing from year to year.

The holistic scoring procedure can also provide much more information about the *general characteristics* of student writing at particular grade levels. If a reasonably large random sample of compositions is buried for scoring by several scorers (thus yielding highly reliable scores), these compositions can be subsequently analysed in many ways: they can be indexes of complexity of sentence structure, characteristics such as organization and flavour, and frequency of errors (and of error types). The usefulness of such information will be considerable to teachers in planning program modifications to meet writing needs and in assessing future writing performance.

A sample of compositions holistically scored may be subjected to further analyses involving such things as error counts and "T-units", a measure of the complexity of sentence structure. Other kinds of linguistic analysis are possible as well. Some of these methods are outlined informally in C.R. Cooper, "Measuring Growth in Writing", *The English Journal*, March 1975, pages 111-20.

Holistic scoring on an annual basis has many advantages: it gives additional reliable evidence of how a student stands in relation to his peers; it provides the basis for a good deal of information about the writing program (the characteristics of the writing, the writing problems, evidence of improvement in subsequent years); and, when used across several grades, it provides information on the characteristics of writing as they develop from grade to grade.

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